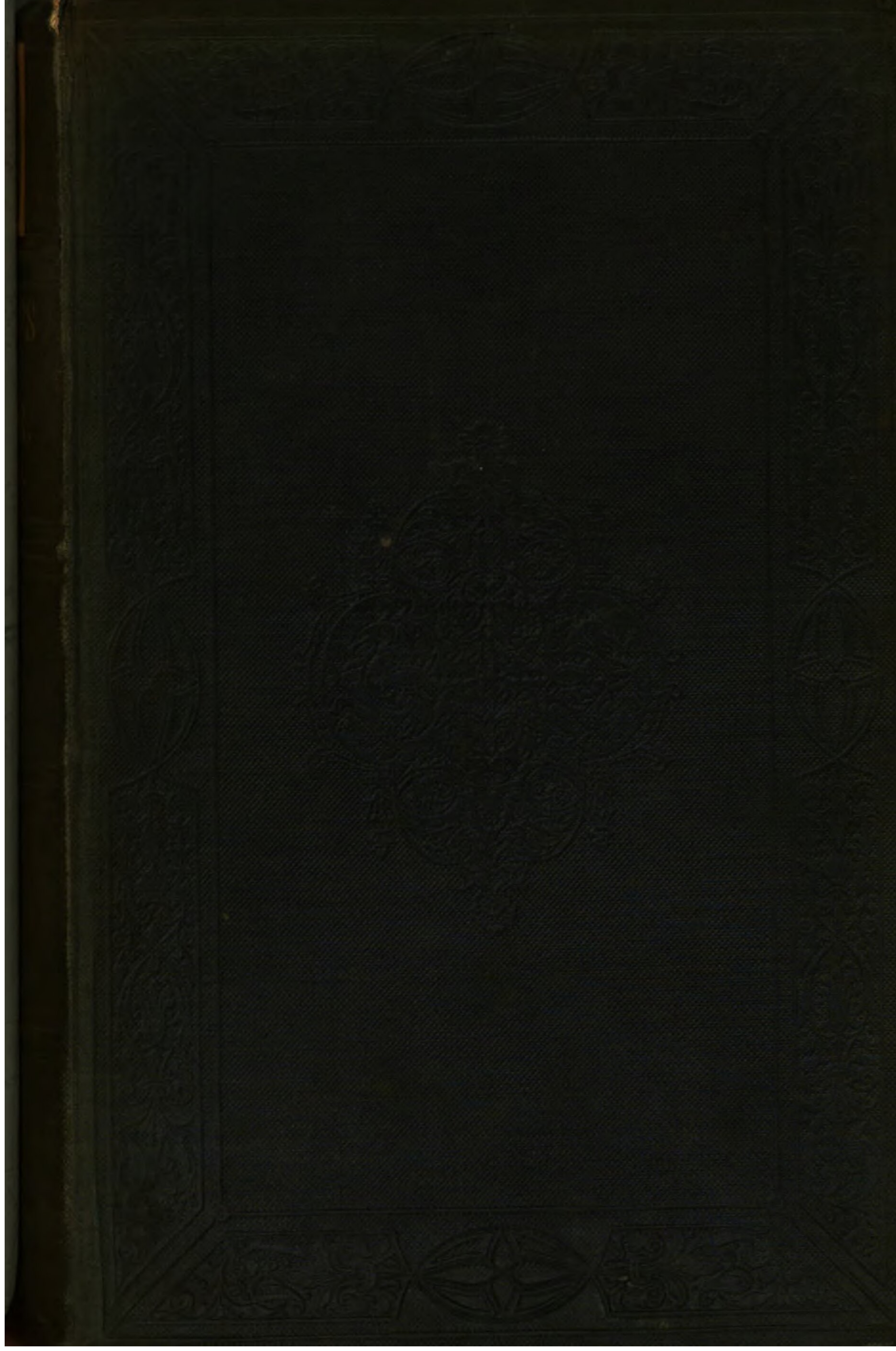




Sold by
J. STEWART,
110 WILLIAM ST.
Strand, London.

Biogr. 1229 P

(Walker)

Sidney

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY

SAMUEL WALKER, B.A.

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE

REV. SAMUEL WALKER, B.A.

PRINTED BY R. B. BELL, AND BY THE
AND SOLD BY J. AND C. BELL
7, PATERNOSTER, LONDON.
1844.

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE

REV. SAMUEL WALKER, B.A.

L. AND G. SEELEY, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE

REV. SAMUEL WALKER, B. A.

FORMERLY OF

TRURO, CORNWALL.

BY THE

REV. EDWIN SIDNEY, A. M.

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF THE REV. ROWLAND HILL, A. M." &c.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

"Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour ;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise."

GOLDSMITH.

PUBLISHED BY R. B. SEELEY AND W. BURNSIDE,
AND SOLD BY L. AND G. SEELEY,
FLEET STREET, LONDON.

MDCCCXXXVIII.

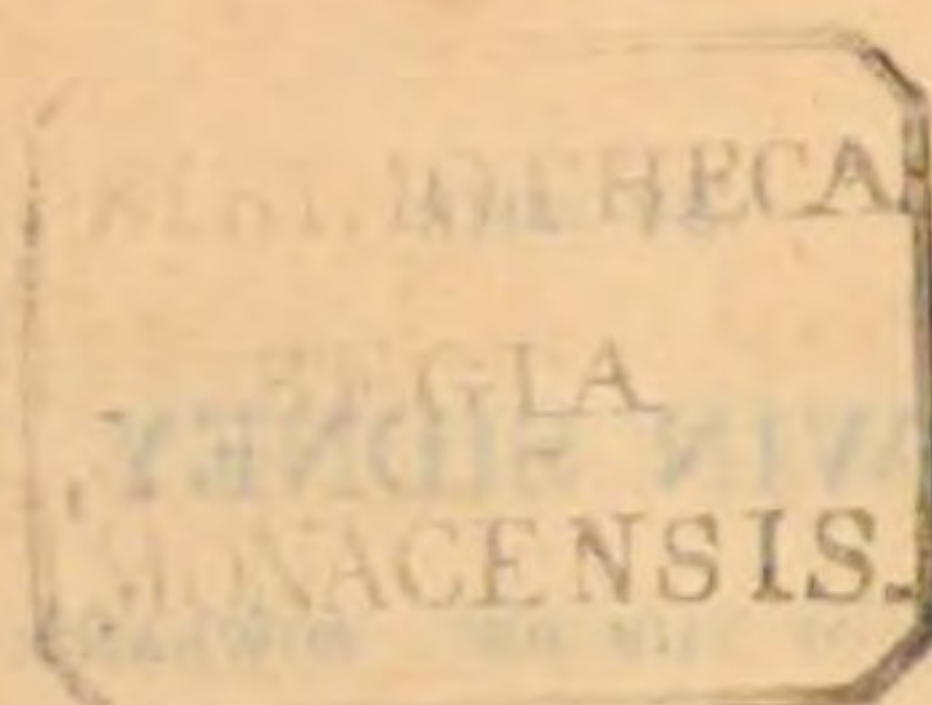
THE LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE

REV. SAMUEL WALKER, B.A.

BY THE

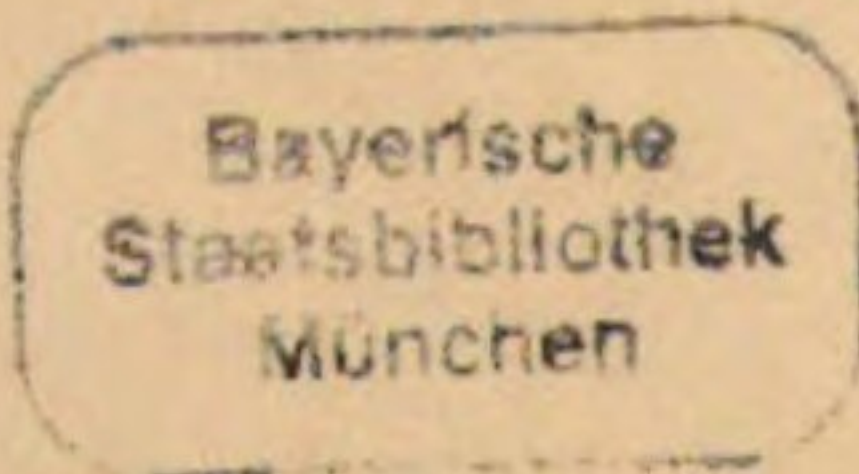
THEO. CORNWALL



REV. BRYAN SIDNEY, A.D. 1813

When first to raise the wretched from the
low state of the poor has been
the duty of the church, it is
the duty of the church to
be to the poor, as well as to
the church.

PUBLISHED BY J. B. SHERLEY AND W. BURNARD
AND SOLD BY J. AND G. SHERLEY
FLEET STREET, LONDON.



w/3 1044
d/w

PREFACE.

THE nucleus of the first edition of my Life of the Rev. Samuel Walker was found among the papers of the late Rev. Rowland Hill, and consisted of five Sermons on Brotherly Love, to which he had prefixed a brief prefatory memoir expressive of his high admiration both of these discourses and their author. This induced me to entertain the design of publishing them with such additions as I might be able to collect, little imagining that my gleanings would afford materials for any thing like a considerable volume. Nor should I ever have possessed the information necessary for my first publication, but for the kindness of several members of the Rawlings family, resident near the scene of Mr. Walker's labours. They had fortunately preserved many interesting documents, as memorials of a ministry and friendship, which had been the means of enkindling in one of their name, that sacred flame which has been transmitted in its original brightness to the present genera-

tion. These they unhesitatingly placed at my disposal, in the most friendly manner, and my highest acknowledgments are due to them. I was favoured also by the late excellent J. B. Wilson Esq. of Clapham, the Rev. T. Wildbore of Falmouth, the Rev. C. Bridges, of Old Newton, Suffolk, and W. Lloyd, Esq. of the Religious Tract Society, with such hints and remains as they had been able to collect. The late venerable incumbent of Padstow, and his relative, the Rev. Mr. Rawlings, of Lansallos, sent me many manuscript sermons of Mr. Walker, from which I made the selections added to those on Brotherly Love, originally appended to the Life. But most unexpectedly, since that volume came out, the obliging disposition of William Gray, Esq. of York, whose judgment, piety, and enlightened Churchmanship have long been appreciated by a large circle of friends, induced him to offer me, with the concurrence of the late Rev. W. Richardson, the use of the greater part of the important and valuable correspondence, which has supplied all that was wanting to make the biography of Mr. Walker complete. I have now, therefore, the opportunity of presenting to the public, without the Sermons, which I reserve for a collection of his Miscellaneous Works, a full account of this eminent Clergyman, both as regards his parochial administrations, and his connection with the most distinguished revivalists of his day. I have also the satisfaction of supplying a chasm in the history of Methodism.

The object I have had in view is twofold—first, to shew the great usefulness of a Clergyman skilled

to give its due effect to the spiritual system of our Church, and thereby affording a practical illustration of its excellence and power ;—secondly, to prove that the spirit of wisdom and zeal which now animates such numbers of the ministers of our Establishment, is the fruit, not of the ardour of the *irregulars* of the last century, but of the gradual influence of that example, which was set by Mr. Walker and his cotemporary *regulars*. If I have attained these ends, my labour has not been in vain, and may, by God's blessing, be the means of exciting many to imitate their firmness of principle, consistency of conduct, and charity of heart.

Acle, near Norwich.

April 4, 1838.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

FROM MR. WALKER'S BIRTH TO HIS CONVERSION, AND FIRST FRUITS
OF HIS MINISTRY.

	PAGE
Design of this Memoir - - - - -	1
Mr. Walker's Family, Birth, and Boyhood - - -	2
Mr. Walker at Oxford. His Degree. First Curacy -	3
His Travels. He accepts the Vicarage of Lanlivery -	4
Takes the Curacy of Truro in 1746 - - - - -	5
Defects of his first Ministry at Truro - - - - -	6
Necessity of Grace in the Heart - - - - -	7
His Suspicions and Acquaintance with Mr. Conon -	8
Character of Mr. Conon - - - - -	9
Effects of his Conversation on Mr. Walker - - -	11
Alteration of Mr. Walker's Views - - - - -	12
His Withdrawal from the World - - - - -	13
Immorality of the Times - - - - -	14
Faithful Preaching - - - - -	15
Its Effects - - - - -	16
Error in Preaching - - - - -	17
First Fruits of Mr. Walker's Labours - - - - -	18

CHAPTER II.

SCHEMES OF PRIVATE INSTRUCTION—FACTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF
MR. WALKER'S MINISTERIAL CHARACTER.

	PAGE
Mr. Walker's Dealings with his Converts - - -	20
His Sound Practical Judgment - - -	21
First Scheme of Private Instruction - - -	22
Second Scheme of Private Instruction - - -	41
Mr. Walker's Penetration - - -	47
Anecdote - - -	48
Opposition. Anecdote - - -	49
Religious Consistency - - -	50
Mr. Walker resigns his Vicarage - - -	51
Anecdote - - -	53
Evidences of Sincerity - - -	54
An Instance of Discretion - - -	55

CHAPTER III.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES, LAY AND CLERICAL.

Formation of the Society at Truro - - -	56
Mr. Walker's Account of it to Mr. Adam of Wintringham .	57
His Care in Forming it - - -	58
<i>Considerations</i> laid before the Members at its Opening,	
February 7, 1754 - - -	59
<i>Orders</i> for its Regulation - - -	63
The Mode in which its Meetings were conducted - - -	66
Observations - - -	67
Remarks of Mr. Adam - - -	69
Mr. Walker's Reply - - -	69
Conversations - - -	71

	PAGE
<i>Hints for Prayer</i> at the Meetings - - - -	72
Clerical Club - - - -	76
A Visitation Sermon. Pluralities - - - -	79

CHAPTER IV.

CATECHISING. USE OF THE SEASONS KEPT BY OUR CHURCH.

Catechising as carried on at Truro - - - -	81
Mr. Adam's plan at Wintringham - - - -	83
Use made by Mr. Walker of the <i>Seasons</i> kept by our Church - - - -	84

CHAPTER V.

THE DAILY CHURCH SERVICE.

Importance attached by Mr. Walker to the Prayers of the Church - - - -	89
His Exposition of the Daily Service - - - -	90
Spirituality of Mr. Walker's Flock - - - -	123

CHAPTER VI.

THE LITANY. BAPTISM. THE LORD'S SUPPER. MATRIMONY.

Mr. Walker's Exposition of the Litany - - - -	125
Baptism. Sponsors - - - -	136
Festivities at Christenings - - - -	138
The Lord's Supper - - - -	139
Matrimony. Letters of Mr. Walker - - - -	143

CHAPTER VII.

MR. WALKER'S VIEW OF THE DOCTRINES AND PROGRESS OF METHODISM — CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HIM, J. WESLEY, AND MR. ADAM, ON THESE SUBJECTS.

	PAGE
High Repute of Mr. Walker's Judgment - - -	149
A Consultation. Berridge - - -	150
Wesley in Difficulties - - -	151
Fears of Mr. Walker - - -	152
His Intercourse with the Methodists - - -	153
Wesley's Notion of Faith - - -	154
A Good Symptom of the Times - - -	155
Sensible Feelings - - -	156
Mr. Walker's Exemplary Spirit - - -	158
Conference of 1755 - - -	160
Pamphlet of J. Wesley - - -	161
Walsh - - -	162
Letter of Mr. Walker to J. Wesley - - -	164
Mr. Wesley's Answer - - -	173
Reply of Mr. Walker - - -	178
The Clergy. J. Wesley's Address - - -	183

CHAPTER VIII.

LETTERS TO MR. ADAM—CONFERENCE OF 1756—CORRESPONDENCE OF MR. WALKER WITH J. AND C. WESLEY, &c.

1756. Object of J. Wesley - - -	185
Unlawfulness of Separation - - -	187
Letter to Mr. Adam - - -	189
Letter to the Same - - -	194
Letter of Mr. C. Wesley to Mr. Walker - - -	201
Letter of Mr. Walker to Mr. J. Wesley - - -	203

	PAGE
Letter of Mr. Walker to Mr. C. Wesley - - - - -	207
The Same to the Same, <i>Private</i> - - - - -	212
Letter of Mr. C. Wesley to Mr. Walker - - - - -	215
Mr. Walker's Answer - - - - -	217
Letter of Mr. Walker to Mr. Adam - - - - -	220
Mr. Adam's Reply - - - - -	224
Happy Issue of the Bristol Conference - - - - -	227
Mr. C. Wesley's Account of it in a Letter to Mr. Walker -	228
Reply of Mr. J. Wesley to Mr. Walker's Proposals - -	230
Mr. J. Wesley's Circular - - - - -	236
Wesleyans and the Church - - - - -	237

CHAPTER IX.

SEPARATION AND LAY-PREACHING.

Causes of Separation - - - - -	240
Its Consequences - - - - -	242
Irregulars and the Clergy - - - - -	243
Enthusiasm of the Former - - - - -	245
Extravagances of the Methodists - - - - -	246
Ill Effects on the Church - - - - -	248
Permanent benefits of Regularity - - - - -	252
Wisdom of the Regulars - - - - -	253
Good Effects of their Example - - - - -	254
True Causes of the Revival of Religion - - - - -	255
Lay-Preaching - - - - -	256
Sanctioned by Wesley - - - - -	257
He Travels with the Preachers - - - - -	258
Their Increase, and his Perplexity - - - - -	259
His Difficulties and Expedients - - - - -	260
Mr. Walker's Predictions verified - - - - -	261
Ranters - - - - -	262
Lay-Preaching Unscriptural - - - - -	263

	PAGE
Spirit of the Church of England - - - - -	267
Necessity of Extension - - - - -	268

CHAPTER X.

ILL-HEALTH OF MR. WALKER FROM OVER-EXERTION—PUBLICATION OF "THE CHRISTIAN." HIS LABOURS AMONG THE SOLDIERS—THEIR LETTERS—SYMPTOMS OF BACKSLIDING—CORRESPONDENCE—CANONS 72 and 73.

Ill-health of Mr. Walker - - - - -	269
His arduous Duties - - - - -	270
His anxious Inquiries - - - - -	271
<i>The Christian</i> - - - - -	272
Mr. Adam's Preface - - - - -	274
Letter of Mr. Walker - - - - -	275
The Soldier's Sermon - - - - -	277
Success in the Regiment - - - - -	278
Soldier's Society - - - - -	279
The Officers. Parting Scene - - - - -	280
First Soldier's Letter - - - - -	281
Second Soldier's Letter - - - - -	283
Symptoms of Backsliding - - - - -	287
Letters of Mr. Walker - - - - -	294
Truro Societies and the Canons - - - - -	299
Canons 72 and 73 - - - - -	301

CHAPTER XI.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. ADAM ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE FOREGOING NARRATIVE—KINDNESS OF LORD DARTMOUTH—SKETCHES.

Character of Mr. Walker's Letters - - - - -	304
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	305
Sketch of Mr. Walker's Early Life - - - - -	310

	PAGE
Christian Privilege - - - - -	312
Letter of Mr. Adam - - - - -	313
The zealous Nonconformists - - - - -	316
Methodism and the Church - - - - -	317
True Friendship of Mr. Adam - - - - -	318
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	319
Notes of one of Mr. Walker's Lectures - - - - -	326
Letter of Mr. Adam - - - - -	327
Generosity of Lord Dartmouth - - - - -	329
Letter to Mr. Adam. Imaginary Sketch by Mr. Walker - - - - -	331
Mr. Adam's Answer - - - - -	333
Sketch of Mr. Adam's Life by Himself - - - - -	336

CHAPTER XII.

MR. WALKER'S DISCIPLINE OF HIS OWN MIND.

Weight of his Character and Self-Scrutiny - - - - -	340
His Remembrance of Time Mispent - - - - -	341
Practical Repentance - - - - -	342
Fear of Man. Anger. Presence of Sin - - - - -	343
Sinfulness of Sin - - - - -	344
Looking unto Christ - - - - -	345
Secret Prayer - - - - -	346
Fluctuations of Experience - - - - -	347
Devotedness. The Communion - - - - -	348
Effects of Faults in his people - - - - -	350
Thoughts in happier moments - - - - -	351
Thoughts on Sickness and Death - - - - -	352
His true Benevolence - - - - -	354
His Conversation in Company - - - - -	355
His Nervousness - - - - -	356
His genuine Faith in Christ - - - - -	357
His Doubts and Difficulties - - - - -	359
His Comfort in the Gospel - - - - -	361

CHAPTER XIII.

PASTORAL ADVICE, AND OPINIONS OF MR. WALKER.

	PAGE
The wisdom and piety of his Counsels - - - - -	362
Duty under Parental Opposition - - - - -	363
Hints on the Birth of a child - - - - -	364
Defective Frame. Patience - - - - -	365
On the Loss of a Friend - - - - -	366
Conviction of Sin - - - - -	367
Counterplot to a Device of Satan - - - - -	368
Benefit of Opposition. Order - - - - -	369
On Worldly Support of Religion - - - - -	371
The Believer's Love of Christ - - - - -	372
Affliction - - - - -	374
Remarkable Letter - - - - -	377
Ordination - - - - -	378
Patronage - - - - -	390
Case of Despair - - - - -	393
Remarks - - - - -	398

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. WALKER'S TOUR—CAUSE OF HIS LEAVING HOME—PERPLEXITIES ABOUT THE BURIAL SERVICE, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES—INCIDENTS ON HIS JOURNEY—INTERCOURSE WITH PIOUS DISSENTERS—REMARKS.

Mr. Walker's Tour - - - - -	399
Letter to Mr. Adam from Exeter - - - - -	400
Burial Service. Perplexing Case - - - - -	401
Alarm of Mr. Walker's Friends - - - - -	403
Letter of Mr. Penrose to Mr. Adam - - - - -	404
Mr. Adam's Answer - - - - -	405

	PAGE
No ground for the Report concerning Mr. Walker - - - - -	407
His Letter to Mr. Adam on returning to Truro - - - - -	409
Intercourse with Dissenters - - - - -	412
Duty of the Clergy - - - - -	417
Strong Hostility to the Church - - - - -	418
Christian Emulation - - - - -	419

CHAPTER XV.

INQUIRIES ON RETURNING HOME—PROOF OF MR. WALKER'S UN-
ALTERABLE ATTACHMENT TO THE CHURCH—CORRESPONDENCE.

Inquiries - - - - -	420
Profitable Example - - - - -	422
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	423
Letter to Mrs. Adam - - - - -	426
Letter of Mr. Adam - - - - -	429
Difference of Ministerial Success - - - - -	432
Encouragements to persevere - - - - -	433
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	434
Mr. Adam's Reply - - - - -	437

CHAPTER XVI.

CONVERSATION SCHEME—DEATH AND FUNERAL OF MR. VOWLER
—LETTERS TO MR. BURNET AND MR. ADAM.

Conversation Scheme - - - - -	440
Letter of Mr. Adam relating to it - - - - -	446
Narration of Experience - - - - -	447
Letter of Mr. Walker to a pious couple - - - - -	448
Death of Mr. Vowler - - - - -	451
Letter of Mr. Walker to Mr. Burnet on his Ordination - - - - -	452
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	455

CHAPTER XVII.

LETTERS OF MR. WALKER ON DOCTRINAL POINTS—HIS REMOVAL TO LODGINGS—LORD DARTMOUTH'S GENEROSITY—HIS OWN AND MR. ADAM'S WRITINGS, &C.—MR. VENN AND MR. BURNET—MR. TALBOT OF KINETON, &C.

	PAGE
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	463
The same to the same . - - - -	473
Christ our Righteousness - - - -	476
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	479
Extract from a Letter of Mr. Haweis relating to Mr. Talbot	481
Mr. Talbot - - - - -	484

CHAPTER XVIII.

LETTERS OF MR. WALKER ON THE VISITS OF MR. TALBOT AND MR. ROMAINE TO TRURO—HIS SUBSCRIPTION SCHEME—ARCHDEACON BASSET, &C.—MR. ADAM'S AND THE ARCHDEACON'S OPINION OF THE SCHEME—PROSPECT OF INVASION.

Mr. Talbot and Mr. Romaine visit Mr. Walker - - -	485
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	486
Cause of Mr. Romaine's visit - - - - -	489
Subscription Scheme - - - - -	489
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - - -	492
Mr. Adam's Reply relative to the Subscription Scheme -	495
Opinion of Archdeacon Basset - - - - -	499
Remarks - - - - -	500

CHAPTER XIX.

MR. WALKER'S LAST SERMON AT TRURO—HIS ILLNESS, AND REMOVAL TO BRISTOL HOTWELLS—HIS KIND RECEPTION IN THE HOUSE OF LORD DARTMOUTH, AT BLACKHEATH.

	PAGE
Decay of Mr. Walker's Constitution - - - -	501
His Last Sermon at Truro - - - -	502
His severe attack of illness - - - -	507
Letters of Lord Dartmouth - - - -	508
Mr. Walker removes to Bristol Hotwells - -	513
Sufferings of Mr. Walker—Death of Mrs. Adam -	513
Mr. Walker's Letter of Condolence to Mr. Adam -	514
Letter to the Truro Society - - - -	518
Letter to Jonah Milford - - - -	522
His last Letter to Mr. Rawlings - - - -	525
Letter to Jonah Milford - - - -	527
His conduct in Sickness - - - -	528
His Removal to Blackheath - - - -	529
Letter of Lord Dartmouth - - - -	530
Mr. Walker's Situation at Blackheath - - -	531
Anecdote - - - -	532
Letter to Mr. Adam - - - -	534
Mr. Walker's Zeal - - - -	537

CHAPTER XX.

MR. WALKER'S LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH—HIS CHARACTER—PERSONAL APPEARANCE—WRITINGS—REMARKS.

Approach of Mr. Walker's end - - - -	538
Letter of Mr. Haweis to Mr. Adam, with Mr. Walker's last Postscript - - - -	539
Mr. Walker's true Comforts - - - -	540

	PAGE
Lord Dartmouth's account to Sir Richard Hill - - -	541
Letter of Lord Dartmouth - - - - -	542
Mr. Walker writes to Mr. Conon - - - - -	544
Mr. Burnet's account - - - - -	545
Letter of Mr. Jane - - - - -	547
Mr. Walker's joyous Exultation - - - - -	549
Lord Dartmouth's account to Mr. Rawlings - - -	551
Mr. Walker's Death, July 19, 1761 - - - - -	553
Letter of Mr. Burnet - - - - -	554
Lord Dartmouth to Sir Richard Hill after the Funeral -	555
Remarks of Mr. Hervey on Mr. Walker - - - - -	557
His Person and Character - - - - -	558
His Works - - - - -	559
Concluding Remarks - - - - -	562

CHAPTER XX.

THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. SAMUEL WALKER.

CHAPTER I.

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS CONVERSION, AND FIRST
FRUITS OF HIS MINISTRY.

DESIGN OF THIS MEMOIR.

THERE are many names more conspicuous in the religious history of the last century than that of Samuel Walker, of Truro, because their exertions extended over a wider surface ; but no minister has left for the imitation of posterity, a more distinguished pattern of parochial administration. While others, engaged in a laborious itinerancy, were endeavouring to break the spell of that lethargy which had spread its fatal charm over the land, this exemplary pastor was constructing from limited and unpromising materials, a model of the private duty of such as are appointed to spiritual cures among settled portions of the people. It is intended in these pages, to collect and re-unite the scattered fragments of this admirable study for every

shepherd of a flock, and particularly for those who design, in humble reliance on assistance from above, to employ, for the benefit of souls committed to their charge, the truly scriptural and therefore effective machinery of the church of England.

The subject of this narrative was born in the city of Exeter, Dec. 16, 1714, and was the youngest of seven children. Members of his family had represented their native place in parliament for many generations, amongst whom was his paternal grandfather, Sir Thomas Walker, Knight. In addition to this reputable connection, he had the honour of being lineally descended from the great Bishop Hall, by the marriage of the only daughter of the youngest son of that distinguished prelate with the last mentioned gentleman. His parents were Robert Walker, Esq. of Exeter, and Margaret, daughter of the Rev. Richard Hall, minister of St. Edmund and All-Hallows, in that city. Till he was eight years of age, Samuel was the subject of parental tuition under his father's roof, but received the next ten years' education at the grammar school in Exeter. We have no account of the progress he made in learning during his boyhood, or of his character in the midst of his school-fellows, but his works all bespeak the judicious cultivation of a naturally powerful and discerning mind. At eighteen he was sent to Exeter College, Oxford, where he cultivated logic with much success, and always considered his early devotion to that study, as the foundation of the facility he afterwards attained in a clear and methodical arrangement of his ideas.

When complimented by his friends, who admired the lucid and argumentative mode in which he treated every subject, he always observed that logic had been his favourite pursuit in youth, and recommended it to all young divines. Of his mode of life at the University we know little ; but he appears to have possessed habits of application, which prevented his entering with excess into the gaieties and temptations that surrounded him. In addition to both capacity and inclination to acquire knowledge, he seems always to have had a pleasing propensity to adorn his conduct with the graces of integrity and virtue, and took pains to give to morals of a mere earthly temper, the brightest polish they were capable of receiving. Besides his high mental endowments and virtuous disposition, nature had given him a most attractive and commanding person, with handsome expressive features, indicating all the characteristics of manly open intelligence. Frank and unreserved in conversation, freely communicating his own thoughts, and courteously listening to others, he became an agreeable companion to such as appreciated the value of his society, and was respected by the whole circle of his acquaintance. But the scions of virtue and morality had been grafted on the wild stem of human nature, and produced nothing but blossoms ; it was when his heart became changed by the grace of God, that they ripened into fruit.

Mr. Walker proceeded to his degree of B. A. and took orders in the year 1737. He had, however, at that time no right impression of the responsibility

and sacredness of the ministerial office. "The week before my ordination," he said afterwards of himself, "I spent with the other candidates, as dissolute I fear as myself, in a very light, indecent manner; dining, supping, drinking and laughing together, when God knows we should have been all on our knees, and warning each other to fear for our souls in the views of what we were about to put our hands to." His first curacy was the parish of Dodescomb Leigh, in the vicinity of his native place, which he held only till August, 1738. He discharged the duties of a pastor at this early period of life, with diligence; and his private character was altogether unimpeachable. He left his parish at the request of Lord Rolle, who invited him to undertake the tuition of his youngest brother during a journey through France, a proposal to which the advantages of travelling abroad induced him readily to yield. While on this tour, he cultivated those lighter accomplishments which give a grace and charm to the man of letters, particularly the arts of music and dancing, in both of which he excelled. After being thus employed for two years, he returned home, and went to reside at Lanlivery, in Cornwall, as curate to his friend Mr. Nicolas Kendall, canon of Exeter, and archdeacon of Totness. On the death of the archdeacon in the spring of 1740, Mr. Walker was presented to the vicarage of his parish, to hold during the minority of a nephew of Walter Kendall, Esq. patron of the living.

During the time Mr. Walker continued at Lanlivery, he was both a teacher and an example of virtue.

His talents rendered him an attractive preacher, while his decorous life and fascinating manners ensured him much affection and respect. He reproved, exhorted, and watched over the people of his flock, preaching, catechising, and visiting diligently in private; nor could any minister more sincerely deplore evident unfruitfulness in his spiritual vineyard. His husbandry, however, extended only to the branches; he was unacquainted with the nature and cultivation of the root. While under a severe sickness in the year 1744, he dictated a letter, to be sent in case he should not recover, as his dying remonstrance to certain of his parishioners, whose names he desired to be taken down. These persons had been the most inattentive to his admonitions, and he thus manifested a sincere interest in their welfare. Could he have seen an outward decency in these individuals, he would have died content, and discovered the defects of his ministry in another world; but it pleased a gracious Providence to raise him from the bed of sickness, and to shew him the insufficiency of all virtue that does not spring from a heart made acquainted with its natural enmity against God and holiness, reconciled to him through the death of Christ, and purified by the holy, and therefore necessarily reforming operations of the divine Spirit.

In the summer of 1746, Mr. Walker resigned the vicarage of Lanlivery to the young gentleman for whom he held it, and removed to the curacy of Truro. He eagerly embraced the offer of a residence in this populous town, that he might enjoy the pleasures of

exhilarating company, and engage in festivities and amusements, of which he was passionately fond. Though regular and decent in the external observance of the forms of religion, he acknowledged his heart to have been in the world, and confessed that a desire of applause was, in a great measure, the motive of his exhibition of accomplishments in society, and of his sermons and activity as a minister. He had not yet preached nor borne the *cross*, and therefore, during his days of worldliness, his private rebukes and pulpit advice gave no offence.

During his first year at Truro, his only ambition seemed to be that he might be courted for his gaiety, admired for his eloquence, and become the reformer of the vicious by the power of persuasion and force of example. He was not in his preaching a mere common-place teacher of moral truths, but his extensive reading had rendered him what is called a *divine*. He had, as we are informed by himself, "historical notions" of the leading doctrines of the gospel—the *corruption of man's nature, his misery and helplessness; the satisfaction and sufficiency of Christ; the necessity of a renewed mind; the need of the work of the Spirit*. These, he tells us, he "knew notionally, but neither felt nor taught them practically." In fact, the period was just passed when these subjects had been treated with eminent learning, but with little or no unction, by men of erudition and research, but whose light, being only human, while it rendered their pages luminous, left them confused. From the writings of these celebrated theologians, it is probable

that Mr. Walker drew much of his lore. In common with many others, he had studied the popular treatises published not long previous to the accession of the House of Hanover, neglecting the older and sounder, yet not less learned divines of our church.

If human qualifications, however lovely, were capable of making an efficient minister of Christ, Mr. Walker would have shone conspicuously in that character, during his first year's residence at Truro ; but he had to learn the important lesson, that the fairest union of morals, knowledge, and urbanity, is insufficient without grace, to a successful exercise of the pastoral office. All the external brilliancy of man's learning cannot render the mysteries of scripture distinctly visible in this benighted world. The gospel is like a transparency, whose characters can only be clearly read in darkness by light from within ; and this must be the candle of the Lord, illuminating the pages of his own word. Acquaintance with the theory of Christian doctrine, and the rigid performance of every social duty, ought invariably to distinguish a teacher of the gospel ; but he may exhibit these excellences in some degree, and yet be destitute of grace and wisdom. Happily for us, the holiness of our God renders the converse of this impossible. The spirit of Christ in our hearts is the sure spring of a performance of all moral obligations, and the true regulator, in the command to love each other as ourselves, of every relation of man to man. The hardest lesson human beings have to learn is, that works must be the *evidence*, though they cannot be

the *price* of our justification. Want of this view of the true nature of spiritual religion in his early course, was afterwards bitterly lamented by Mr. Walker, who says, that "though he was thought well of, and indeed esteemed beyond most of his brethren for regularity, decency, and endeavours to keep up external attendances, and somewhat or other in his public addresses," yet he felt, when looking back upon the time he spent at Lanlivery, he "ought to go sorrowing to the grave, upon a review of six years so passed over."

He had been "at least a year" in his curacy at Truro, before he fell under "any suspicion or uneasiness" about himself or his manner of preaching. The first impression that he was in error, arose from reflection on a conversation between himself and a few of his parishioners, on the subject of *justifying and saving faith*, to which he was judiciously led by a pious and able individual. This was Mr. Conon, master of the grammar school at Truro, who, he said, was "verily the first person he had ever met with, truly possessed of the mind of Christ, and by whose means he became sensible that all was wrong within and without."

It was a singular incident which led to this good man's intimacy with his minister. Mr. Walker received a letter containing a sum of money, which the writer requested him to pay at the custom-house, as justly due to the revenue, for duty on some French wines he had used for his health. He had been unsuccessful in his attempts, in that age of smuggling

on the coast, to obtain any on which custom had been paid, but the virtuous conscience of the spiritual Christian remembered his Master's divine command.¹ The letter contained an apology for troubling Mr. Walker, but stated that his high character would prevent all suspicion of a want of straight-forward honesty in the transaction. Curious to know whether the same happy conscientiousness was manifest in all his doings, Mr. Walker sought his acquaintance, and the result was a respect approaching to veneration, for one who exhibited in his daily habits, all the true influence of religion on a Christian's heart and actions. The attractions of his conversation and the purity of his life, at length ripened intercourse into intimacy, and the result was the conversion of the minister, through the wise and prudent instrumentality of his pious friend.

Mr. Conon was one of those rare and devoted Christians, who in an age of darkness, shone with a lustre little comprehended and greatly opposed; but he was content to be *hated without a cause*, and to suffer obloquy and shame for the Lord's sake.

Though threatened with the loss of stipend and scholars,—a threat afterwards actually carried into effect—he persevered in his course, and like the glow-worm, shone brightest, when the gathering of the dark night-clouds gave warning of an impending tempest. He was persecuted purely for the sake of his religion, being acknowledged on all hands to be

¹ Matthew xxii. 21.

an instructor of youth of extraordinary ability, to whose tuition almost all the gentlemen's sons in the middle and western part of Cornwall had been committed. But he was guilty of the unpardonable crime, in those days, of training up his pupils in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; an error far less venial in the eyes of their ignorant and prejudiced parents, than neglect of their morals or education. During several years of happy friendship, his pastor and convert never took any step of importance in the management of his parish, without asking his advice. He bore hostility with the truest Christian resignation, and carried himself with a dignity and mildness that would have disarmed the rancour of all enemies, but such as abhor the image of the Saviour wherever they may find it, and whose corrupt nature renders them irreconcilable to spirituality of mind and holiness of life. Speaking of his school and the treatment he received, he says in a letter,¹ written under the pressure of severe illness—"this has shaken my purposes in regard to the school. I am engaged in honour and conscience to do all I can for the good of it and the public, and have forgot, and most heartily forgiven all former bad treatment and even present unkindness." The severest blow he ever received was the death of his beloved minister and friend, an event which, coupled with other circumstances in after years, induced him to remove to Padstow, where he undertook the instruction of a select

¹ Vid. *Wills's Spiritual Register*, vol. iii. p. 34, London, 1795.

number of pupils. This occupation was his great delight, and he frequently expressed a wish, that if it pleased God, he might die while employed in his school, and that suddenly. His desire was granted. One Saturday evening, after endeavouring to prepare the youthful minds of his scholars for the solemnities of the coming sabbath, he earnestly prayed for a blessing on his labours, when suddenly the stroke of death silenced his voice of supplication, and changed it for that of ceaseless thanksgiving in regions of eternal praise.

At first, the conversation of Mr. Conon only excited in Mr. Walker's mind a suspicion of himself, but this was soon succeeded by the deepest convictions. He was a character of all others the most difficult to deal with, inasmuch as freedom from "gross sins" and a general conscientiousness had covered with a specious bloom, the poison of a corrupt nature. The openly profligate will often readily acknowledge the sinfulness of their career; but the most arduous portion of a minister's work is with those who imagine that they are fulfilling all the duties of life, and expect that imperfect *human merit*, will ensure them an eternal reward. Such persons, like Mr. Walker, may have "learnt to reason in a speculative and historical way upon man's degeneracy," and yet, as he did, live "many years in an entire ignorance of a corrupted nature," deceived by outward decency into the supposition that they have escaped its guile. At length, to use his own words, "it pleased God in some measure, to enlighten the

eyes of his understanding," and then he reverted with feelings of amazement to his days of blindness, and was enabled to look into the secret recesses of his soul, and to see that while he fancied he was serving the Lord, his heart was occupied by idols. He acknowledges that in the midst of all the decorum of his conduct, he was actuated by two "hidden principles, as contrary to God as darkness is to light"—"a desire of reputation and a love of pleasure;" yet before his mind became enlightened, he had not "the least suspicion that he was out of the way." He found also that while he sincerely desired that his people should come "to church and sacrament, and not drink and swear, and the like," yet he had never felt any interest in, nor "taken the least notice of their spiritual state," because he was in total ignorance of the "effects of the fall," and therefore knew not how "to make a right use of the gospel." The change wrought upon him was slow; but in process of time, and by a variety of means, he was brought to *the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus*. Then Truro, which he designed to be the arena of his gaiety, became the scene of his unwearied labours of love, and the birth-place, by his instrumentality, of many heirs of a blissful immortality.

It was not till some time after his first impressions, that Mr. Walker commenced the decided course which he subsequently pursued. He had many struggles with himself, and "was ashamed to leave" the amusements he had once so much enjoyed, in a town notorious for its worldliness and frivolity.

“The love of pleasure,” he tells us, decayed first ; but he “could only part with it by degrees,” and it was long before he could bring himself to “any reasonable measure of indifference about the esteem of the world,” and then only with “heartfelt pangs of fear and disquietude.” When invited to participate in his former enjoyments, he was reluctant to refuse, because there had been no species of what is called innocent festivity, of which he had not been the life. But at length he resolved to absent himself from all company uncongenial with the newly-awakened feelings of his mind, and to give himself up entirely to the ministry.

He next began to preach as he felt, declared the alteration in his views, and faithfully pointed out the evils of the vortex of empty pleasures in which the inhabitants of his parish were involved, and the danger of the mere formalities of sabbath worship, on which they rested for salvation. Repentance, faith, and the new-birth, became the topics of his sermons ; truths which, treated with all the powers of his highly cultivated mind, brought down on him hatred as an enthusiast, derision as a madman, and vehement opposition as the destroyer of harmless joys. An infidel even went so far as to insult him in the pulpit, an affront which he bore with extraordinary patience and dignity.

The progress of divine grace in Mr. Walker’s mind was by slow degrees, and it was only gradually that both his views and preaching became matured. He had not courage at first to proclaim the gospel to

his people in its fulness, and to attack the depravity of man. It was only, as he said, "by and by" that he "began to deal with them as lost sinners, and beat down formality and self-righteousness, and to preach Christ;" and then, and not till then, "the fruit of this, by the mighty working of the Spirit, quickly appeared." There is among his papers a sermon on Matt. xviii. 7, preached Dec. 7, 1746, wherein he inveighs against those outward immoralities, which he describes as abounding awfully on all sides. It contains much of powerful *moral* address to parents, masters, and others, and concludes with an admonition to those who neglected attendance at the communion, but it is totally deficient in evangelical application. This sermon he delivered again at St. Olave, April 5, 1747, and at Truro, Oct. 9, 1748, which last date is subsequent to the period of his becoming suspicious of the unsatisfactory nature of his state of mind. His description of the conduct of his neighbours, is a melancholy confirmation of what has been stated by so many writers, as to the character of that part of the last century. He remarks, "I observe in general, that in all ranks and orders of men professing Christianity and the practice of religion, there is yet so little of it to be found, that all seriousness and decency are actually put out of countenance; and a man must have a large share of resolved piety not to be drawn by the authority of the great, and the example of the multitude, into infidel or libertine notions, or licentious practice. Indeed *there seems to be a general conspiracy in the cause of*

wickedness, by which every man, one would think, was engaged to entice his neighbour into the unchristian practices which the world in one shape or other is guilty of." But these vices were noticed and condemned by him, without any declaration of the cause or true remedy of the depraved condition of the world, till increasing grace begat in him a holy boldness to assert, without fear of man, the corruption of our nature, and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Upon this the gall of human bitterness overflowed, and the sinners who could bear to have their visible faults plainly exposed, were unable to endure the searching probe of a faithful gospel, and vented their enmity to it in reviling, insulting, and persecuting their newly awakened monitor. He now preached *repentance* according to the gospel, in the following powerful language—"Christ sets up remission of sins and other most gracious privileges, but then they belong only to those that repent. Repentance and remission of sins, saith he, must be preached in my name through the world. Do you consider this, you who are yet in your sins, labouring after the meat that perisheth, drudging in the nastiness of lust; you that are proud and high-minded and selfish; you that are lovers of pleasure, living without God in the world? Do you know that you are never the better for that Christ hath died for you, rather much the worse—heirs of a blacker destruction, seeing you have denied so much offered grace and mercy! And you, too, who are setting up a religion of your own, who conceit that you are well

enough, because you are not altogether so abandoned as your neighbour ; you who content yourselves with doing no harm, and you who satisfy yourselves with the outside, the formality of holiness ; whilst you have never discovered the hidden iniquities of your hearts, nor put on the power of godliness ; and you also who are at a stand, easy with just so much holiness as you imagine will carry you to heaven, and now striving for no larger victories nor more enlivened graces, than those poor mistaken ones you already possess. Do you know that none of you have repented ! Repentance, you will hear, is a work which convinces us of utter sinfulness, and confounds us with the sense of it ; it brings us down to the dust, and makes us feel that we are nothing, and can do nothing to deliver ourselves ; which makes us hate sin and refuse it in every shape ; which engages us to strive earnestly against it, and never to imagine we are got far enough from it ; which makes us delight in holiness, and endeavour to do all things, be they great or little, to the glory of God ; and ready and zealous to every good word and work towards him and our neighbour. Such a repentance is the only proof that we have an interest in Christ." Appeals of this description could not fail to excite the feelings of those who heard them, and their first ebullition was in anger against the man who now denounced the very path in which, the immoralities excepted, he had cheerfully accompanied them, and proclaimed that the profane, the lustful, and the formalist, were all marching with the multitude on the same broad

road to destruction. Still, the earnestness of the preacher, and the striking alteration of his habits as well as of the tone of his sermons, stirred up the curiosity of the people, who while they were enraged at the fidelity, were enchained by the eloquence, and trembled at the sternness of their reprover. Even out of the pulpit, they feared the presence of their minister. The Sabbath loiterers would retire at his approach, saying "let us go, here comes Walker." His manner is said to have been commanding and solemn in the extreme: and his life was so truly in unison with his precepts, that at length he awed into silence those who were at first most clamorous against him. Such crowds attended his ministry, that the thoroughfares of the town seemed to be deserted during the hours of service, so that it was remarked, "you might fire a cannon down every street of Truro in church time, without a chance of killing a single human being."

The gross vices and apathy of the age, fully warranted the style of address employed by Mr. Walker; yet it must be confessed, that he does not appear to have sufficiently included *himself* with his hearers, nor to have adverted enough to those days, in which the same cloud that now cast its shadow over his flock, had enveloped his own mind. This would have tended to conciliate without compromise of principle; but in his early sermons, he seems to have spoken to his people as though they had been the only persons in the wrong, and himself not a novice in the truth. This was decidedly the error of the few faithful

preachers of his time, and undoubtedly had the effect of giving offence which might have been avoided. The surest way of getting at the hearts of his congregation, is for the minister to give them fully to understand that he is their fellow-sinner, and in equal need of the one common Saviour by whom alone we can find peace with God. Not that the excellent curate of Truro denied this, far from it, but it was not sufficiently prominent in his discourses, nor is it in those of ministers in general.

The visible effects of Mr. Walker's ministry were most remarkable. In addition to those already mentioned, the play-house and the cock-pit were forsaken and given up to other purposes, and similar reforms extended to places in the neighbourhood through his instrumentality. His own account is very striking—"they were surprised and grew angry, not without an evident fear resting upon them, and an interesting curiosity to hear me again of this matter. I have reason to judge that almost all of them have been, one time or other, awakened more or less, although I fear many of them have *rejected the counsel of God against themselves.*"

Mr. Walker's first convert was a dissipated youth that had been a soldier, who was awakened under one of his striking sermons. He called him his "first and dearest child," and rejoiced over his consistency of life, firmness of faith, and patient endurance of persecution, with all the fondness of a parent. The example of this young man brought others to inquire; but it pleased God to take him to himself,

and to make his death the apparent cause of a great stir among the people. His funeral sermon was the means of many conversions, and the succession of inquirers became so numerous, that Mr. Walker was obliged to rent two rooms at a distance from his lodging in the town, to hold spiritual intercourse with them in private.¹ But few of these were under terrors; the greater part were brought to a knowledge of the truth in a very gentle manner, being led to seek salvation under mourning for sin. The number continually increasing, he considered that his "utmost diligence was needful towards them." How judicious his mode of private instruction, and how intimate his acquaintance with the varied effects of religious impression on different minds will appear in the next chapter.

¹ He afterwards had a house of his own, and saw them at home.

CHAPTER II.

SCHEMES OF PRIVATE INSTRUCTION. FACTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF MR. WALKER'S MINISTERIAL CHARACTER.

MR. WALKER'S DEALINGS WITH HIS CONVERTS.

MR. WALKER found the persons who came to him for spiritual advice, “universally ignorant in the grossest degree.” He accordingly devoted a few evenings in each week to their instruction in private, that he might impart to them a knowledge of the plan of salvation, warn them against insidious allurements to return to the world, and encourage them to disregard the reproach with which they were besieged by enemies of the truth. When the earlier followers of his counsel and ministry had arrived at a more advanced stage of religious progress, he sought their assistance in watching over beginners. He recommended them to converse and pray with each other, and at such times *left them to themselves, only giving them directions as need required.* This was a much

wiser course than encouraging them to exercise their gifts in the presence of their pastor, making spiritual pride the unnatural foster-brother of professed Christian humility. Mr. Walker's penetrating and judicious mind at once perceived and avoided the mistakes of his more celebrated, but not equally practical contemporaries, in the classification of their numerous and scattered converts—evils which were felt at first, and still continue to be most injurious to the growth of genuine religion. That Christians should assemble in small parties for mutual edification, praise, and prayer, no minister can for an instant doubt; but long experience has confirmed the prudence of Mr. Walker in not remaining with them on these occasions, staying only to give his advice and blessing. In allusion to the prayer meeting at Olney, Mr. Scott says, "I soon found it needful or advisable to withdraw, and to leave the persons who conducted it to themselves." Mr. Walker foresaw and escaped these troubles. This cautiousness, in a man of whose zeal, piety, and judgment, there cannot exist even a shadow of doubt, should operate as a lesson to young clergymen, not to be led away by a love of popularity, or by false reasoning, into habits of which they may have to repent, both on account of themselves and their people, to the end of their pastoral career.

The accuracy and thoughtfulness of the sound character of Mr. Walker, did not allow him to trust, as many would have done, to the suggestions of the moment for his private conversations with inquirers, but he drew up systematic plans of instruction, which

may yet perhaps guide many who are placed in similar circumstances. Ministers seldom *prepare* for private interviews with their awakened people, though nothing in their office requires more prayer, reflection, and heavenly wisdom. The first of his papers is as follows.

A SCHEME OF PRIVATE INSTRUCTION IN THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

It is supposed that the person seeking instruction, is awakened to some general concern about his soul.

SECTION I.

The first step is that he be brought to some sense of his guilt, and being liable to the wrath of God, without any refuge in himself. Here it may be useful to state the case of man generally, as born in sin and a child of wrath ; and also to speak of that gracious and all-sufficient remedy provided in the gospel, both of them as certain truths on the authority of God's word, though acknowledged by none to good purpose, unless, and until, the Holy Spirit works them into the heart. The design of this caution is, that the encouragement of the promise may go along with conviction of sin. This is the Scripture way ; repentance and remission are declared together.

Then, that a due discovery may be made in the soul of the former of these truths, *birth-sin* must be

carefully opened, and that in some such way as that man is by nature proud, and carnal, and filthy in the flesh and spirit. The present world is full of objects which are suited to gratify the one and the other. It hath *honour, wealth, grandeur, reputation*, to humour our pride; it hath *indulgence, pleasure, lewdness*, to gratify our carnal appetite. Hence we naturally love this present world, because it is so suited to our natural inclination. Under this influence, the perverted will naturally chooses this present world, and hence the end of creation is overturned, God's sovereignty is injured; for man is *unwilling* and *averse* to do any part of the *will of God*, or to submit to his dispensations. Did God bid us to enjoy the world, we should naturally do it; doth he dispense to us the enjoyments of the world, we are easily content; though in the one case there were no *obedience*, nor in the other any *submission*, because we should so do and be *content*, not to please *him* but *ourselves*. But doth God bid us to love *him*, not the world—doth he expect we be content in the absence of any worldly comforts, as having a sufficient portion in him—both *pride* and *lust* rise up against him, and we *will not*. Pride and lust have thus biassed the will of man; he is entirely selfish; self is his great idol, and in it is implied all manner of ungodliness, such as a spirit of murmuring, unbelief, distrust, unthankfulness, and also all manner of uncharitableness, such as a spirit of resentment, malice, envy, cruelty, covetousness, sloth, vanity. Thus the heart is naturally full of all manner of wickedness, sending forth sin in the

thoughts, words, and actions. From hence hath sprung all that actual sin of *omission* and *commission*, which every man on earth, more or less, hath committed.

Yet, in opening this scheme, it will be mostly proper to begin with the *outward fruits* of birth-sin: to insist on the general carefulness and forgetfulness of God, in which the person hath lived; because the conscience is commonly awakened by a sense of grosser sins at first, and it is of the last importance to preserve and improve that impression; and then afterwards, when the conscience is more tender, to take occasion from the fruits to shew the principle and cause in corrupt nature; which is not effectually done till he hath such experience of himself as readily to trace every outward sin up to the corruption which gave cause to it, and is competently acquainted with the whole body of sin.

This is properly self-knowledge, and the true foundation of walking humbly, much talked of, but little practised by many professors.

Though it be most advisable to argue from the *effect* to the *cause* with grown people, yet the young may perhaps be better dealt with the other way, and immediately made acquainted with birth-sin, which is the point the catechist especially (or often the preacher) should not lose sight of.

Natural pride will be making excuse; the person to be instructed will be pleading to his teacher or himself, that he never knew or thought of this, was never taught, and the like. His conscience must be

appealed to ; he often *quenched* or did *not attend* to it ; he *practised* what he knew to be sin ; and to him only that hath shall be given ; and the peculiar guilt of such a course as his, under gospel light, must be insisted on.

He must be taught to search after his sins, depending on the influence of the Holy Spirit, whose office, he must be shewn, is to convince of sin ; and he must be made sensible of the scriptural promises relating to prayer, and pressed continually thereto.

At the same time somewhat may be said (or thrown in all along) concerning God's perfections, especially his *holiness, justice, and presence*.

He must be often questioned what discoveries he hath made, or what sense he hath of his sins or his heart—whether it be *abiding, with a desire to know more of them*, and full of concern, so that nothing besides goes so near him. He must also be warned against all such things as will lessen the impression, and stop the work of the Spirit, as ill company, trifling conversation, amusements, above all, sloth in prayer, and delay.

The fact being now ascertained, the great consequence, the curse and wrath to come, must be fully laid open. In doing this there should be neither reason nor argument used, but the plain declarations of Scripture only insisted on. If there be any kicking against them, the sense of sin hath not gone deep enough, and he must be set to seek further into it (as indeed we must be always doing, however advanced) till he can coolly and deliberately, upon the

most sedate determination, (not in a mere heat of passion) acquit God of cruelty should he cast him into hell, saying from the bottom of his heart, God hath threatened sin with death, but *I deserve* to die. It is not a full conviction till it comes to this, and it is of great moment to the whole after-state that this should be now fully acknowledged, otherwise God is not justified in his judgment, and there will be much leaning to self-righteousness perhaps ever after.

He must be made clearly sensible of these two things. First, that no future obedience, however perfect, could render God satisfaction for the sin he hath done [so as] to deliver him from the threatened wrath. Secondly, that by reason of the perverse bias of his will, (by means of the *pride* and *lust* of his heart, naturally drawn after earthly things and utterly averse from God,) he hath not the least power of his own to return to God and to serve him.

Thus *full* in every particular must his conviction be, that the pride of his heart may be altogether beat down, (for it will be contending with every inch of this) and the way made plain and open for the Redeemer.

N.B. Though this work be thus methodically set out, yet many workings of faith will often be discovered in the progress of *conviction*, such as kindly touches of self-leaving, true sorrow, and displeasure at sin; and I am inclined to think there may be some beginnings of faith from the very first commencement. The Spirit works as he will, and there is great variety.

SECTION II.

The sinner being brought to a due sense of his guilt, danger, and helplessness, is fitted to hear and receive the promises which are now to be opened to him, and that in some such method as this.

First, and principally, he must be led from the express declarations of the word, by the illumination of the Spirit, to a firm persuasion of Christ's sufficiency ; and seeing this, to a convinced sinner, is the hardest thing in the world, and that also which the artifices of the devil will be above all things opposing, he must be set to search it out in the Scriptures, and in much prayer for the Spirit, labouring that all doubt concerning it may be removed, and that he may be growing up into a more satisfying assurance of Christ's sufficiency. Here these things must be carefully observed by the instructor.

1. That the sinner do not deceive himself by a supposed conviction of this truth, as because he hath always heard it was true, has been taught to assent to it from his youth, nobody seems to doubt it, it is one of the articles of his belief, and all good people believe it. These foundations are merely human, and so must the faith be which is built upon them, neither justifying nor giving peace, nor sanctifying the heart and life.

2. That the only ground of faith is God's word, on which he must and can only build his belief of its sufficiency, so that he must be satisfied hereof from God's mouth.

3. That there is a natural unbelief in his heart of this thing, which he cannot subdue by his own strength.

4. That it is the Spirit must shew him Christ in the Scriptures. In opening this point, he must be made to see the purpose of God before the world, to save sinners by a Redeemer, and the promises consequent to and issuing from that purpose. From *the fall* [he must be shewn] the fitness of the Redeemer in his double nature, his obedience unto death, with the design, fulness, and proofs of his atonement, his exaltation, dominion, and intercession. He must be made sensible how, in the execution of this merciful contrivance, Christ hath magnified the law, satisfied divine justice, taken away the curse; and how, the scheme being purposed at the instance of God's infinite good will towards sinners, planned by his infinite wisdom, and actually engaged for by repeated promises, all the perfections of God, his love, wisdom, truth, and faithfulness, stand at stake for the performance of the whole and every part of it.

Secondly, being persuaded of the sufficiency of this salvation, he must be assured of Christ's *willingness* to be his Saviour, and so be encouraged to make application to him. To this [end] the gospel *invitations* "come and be saved," the gospel *complaints* against such as come not, "ye will not come to me," the gospel *commands*, "this is the will of God, that ye believe," the gospel *threatenings*, "he that believeth not shall be damned," must be made out to him.

N.B. There will often be found a doubt of Christ's

willingness, when there seems to be a persuasion of his *power*. But I suppose they who doubt the former, do so because at the bottom they do not believe truly the latter.

Thirdly, he must be made distinctly to see that this only is the way of salvation, and that the faithful God doth certainly forgive and take into his favour all self-condemned sinners, who come to him by Jesus Christ, and that for Christ's sake only. Not in the least degree for the sake of any thing he sees in them now, or for the sake of any thing the Spirit shall work in them hereafter.

Here the sinner must be guarded against self-righteousness, must be shewn the workings of it in his heart, in those complainings he makes of the want of sensible sorrows and particular frames, which he seeks for to substitute them in place of Christ; ¹ and this he will be apt to lean towards, during his whole after course. This lies couched under that common expression, "God for Christ's sake will forgive us our sins with *true repentance*," where, however true it be, that such as repent not shall perish, yet in the common acceptation of that expression, the repentance is made *the cause* of God's forgiveness, and is put up in the place of Christ; for which, by the way, our self-justiciary divines ²

¹ This remark shews a very deep knowledge of the human heart, and should be indelibly impressed on the minds of such as trust too much to these delusive criteria of their state.

² We here have Mr. Walker's matured view of the character of those divines alluded to in the last chapter.

have given but too much room, in most of those sermons and discourses which have appeared for many years past.

The person to be instructed is by no means to be perplexed with any notions, which in truth have nothing to do with Christianity. As far as it is *notional* Christianity, it is perverted to speculation ; for which reason, at this time at least, he should not be put to determine *what faith precisely is*. The above is the real practice ; and if he be in the practice of it, it is sufficient, and far better that he be not set a disputing and doubting by the various opinions of one and another, concerning the precise nature of justifying faith. Whatever condemned sinner, being persuaded of the sufficiency of Christ, doth commit his soul to him to be saved, doth surely believe ; though he knows not what is the justifying act,¹ yet he certainly performs it. Nor is it of any importance he should know the time when he first did this. Doth he do it *now* ? Doth he live upon Christ daily ? Else whatever he seemed to do and experience a while ago, is of no avail. Yet the instructor should ascertain distinct notions of the true nature of faith, should be clear that it is such a persuasion of Christ's sufficiency, as determines the heart to rest wholly upon him, should separate in his

¹ There is an inaccuracy in this expression. Faith is neither the matter nor meritorious cause of our justification, but only instrumental. The *justifying act* was the atonement of Christ. Mr. Walker would no doubt have corrected this had he printed the scheme himself.

own idea of it, faith from feeling, faith from sight, faith from the fruits and proofs of it, else he will lead the person to be instructed into doubt, if not danger.

The thing to be discerned and kept always in view by the instructor is, that not for the sake of any thing in us, disposition, desire, feeling, joy, love, sorrow, &c., but for the sake of what Christ hath done, we must be accepted. Otherwise, our people will be looking for a Christ in themselves, not a Christ in heaven, and so will either be deceived or discomfited. In a word, the endeavour must be, that the person to be instructed be brought at all times and in all cases, in all frames, high as well as low, and low as well as high, in all attainments, and in all spiritual temptations to rest on Christ only, and so to give God glory by believing.

Especial care must also be had, that his faith be grounded only on God's declarations in the Scriptures, on what he hath heard with his own ears, and seen with his own eyes in them : not taking it for granted these things are so, (as through the slothfulness of his own nature, averse to pains, thought, and inquiry, he will be apt to do) because his instructor says they are, and other good people, nor particularly, putting up the experiences of others in the place of God's word, as is too much the practice of many serious persons in this day. To provide that his faith rest only on God's word, the instructor must carefully direct him thereto, and make the word of God the ground of all he says to him ; and this not only by

taking heed that what he advises be agreeable to Scripture, and the analogy of faith, but also bringing out the Scriptures on all occasions, making the express word of God, suited to the case, the foundation of his advice and direction. To this end the instructor must take care that his own heart be free of all party prejudices, that he means not the sect or denomination, but Jesus only and souls; otherwise he will be usurping authority over the conscience of the instructed, and while he is solicitous to gain him to his persuasion, will not leave him to be taught by the word and Spirit.

SECTION III.

The third great thing is the fruit of faith. After conviction and faith follows *repentance*, (μετάνοια) which is the heart choosing God in Christ as a master and portion, and refusing the service of sin and the delights and confidences of the world, and which is also called *conversion*, and must be understood as the vital act of the will's choosing God, and refraining from the world and sin. This must be distinguished from *sanctification*, which is the carrying forward by the Spirit, that which was begotten in the soul by the fruit of repentance or conversion. Both conversion and daily sanctification are the immediate fruits of faith in Jesus Christ; and the person to be instructed, being brought to Christ for pardon and acceptance with God, must be made diligently and continually to attend to and regard what that mystery of redeeming

love presents to him, in order that it may have a converting and sanctifying influence upon his heart, and must be warned that his faith is not true unless it hath such influence.

It will be hardly possible for the instructor to manage this matter rightly, and to distinguish the real work of the Spirit, converting and sanctifying the heart through faith, from many false appearances, unless he hath a true experience of it in his own soul, and also a distinct understanding of its manner of bringing forth the fruit, wherein he ought experimentally to have wrought in him, and clearly to understand and discover these several things.

1. The gospel representing God as an appeased majesty, infinitely disposed to pardon and receive sinners.

2. As freely offering himself in all his perfections, to the sinner in the gospel, not merely as pardoning, but making over to the sinner in Christ his *whole self*; his power to protect, his wisdom to guide, his countenance to bless, &c. and this in all the unchangeableness and eternity of them.

3. The effects of this discovery upon the heart.

1. The exalting God therein as an object supremely to be desired, and gladly accepted, whose favour, presence, protection, and will, the whole soul approves and prefers as its greatest happiness.

2. A clear sight and sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

3. An unfeigned displeasure at a man's self for having sinned against God, by having sought his

own will, and a happiness from the things of this life, in compliance with the perverse inclination of a corrupt nature.

4. A settled detestation of sin, both of the corrupt principle lying in the heart, and of the various actings of it within and without.

5. An actual determination against every sin, every thing contrary to God, and all the things of this world, as far as they would influence to seduce the heart from God.

Here it is plain that the real motive to delighting in God, and choosing his service, and the true ground of a due sense of the sinfulness of sin, of self-abasement, hatred of sin and actual rejecting it, is an *evangelical* sight of God. When we sinners look on God absolutely, or in the law, all his perfections are against us. [He is] privy to our offences, because he present with us ; displeased at us, because he is holy ; a consuming fire, because he is just ; a terrible enemy, because he is almighty ;—so that in these absolute or *legal* views of God, instead of turning to him we must fly from him. It is his love must draw us, and when we regard him in the gospel as a pardoning God, all his perfections change their face ; his power, holiness, justice, presence, are delightful. So that evidently the motive, and principle of conversion and daily sanctification, is an evangelical sight of God. It is *faith that worketh by love*.

It may be seen from the whole how the Spirit works—viz. by impressing on the heart a sense of sin, he drives the sinner to Christ for mercy, and by

enabling him to believe that God in Christ is a merciful, gracious, and desirable God, doth engage the heart to turn and daily to return to him.

These things being deeply experienced in the heart, and well digested in the head of the instructor, he may easily direct the person into the manner of conversion and sanctification.

First, as to *conversion*. The self-condemned sinner must not only be put to seek for mercy with God at the hand of Jesus, i. e. as was before shewn, to believe his sufficiency and love, making application to him ; but as then he was made to see the grounds of the sufficiency of Christ in the purpose, determination, and promise of God, in order to induce faith, so now he must be set to review the same, as a scheme of mysterious divine love and compassion in order to conversion. He must be put diligently to pray for clear discoveries of God's love and compassion in Christ, and as he is made to grow into them, both his confidence in God will be confirmed, and his heart converted ; that is to say, he will prefer God's favourable countenance to all manner of carnal delights, and the doing God's will to the following of his own. For conversion is nothing else but a new choice which the will makes of God, as a portion instead of the world, as a master instead of corrupt nature. Religion lying in the will, this being duly regulated, all the other powers of the soul must of course be so, because it is the leading power : and it will be needful the instructor should ascertain, that all which can

properly be called religion, doth entirely lie in the will's choosing God in Christ.

Two cautions should herein be in the mind of the instructor.

1. That no other motive can convert the heart but an evangelical sight of God. Legal fear will beget many appearances, such as great uneasiness, much diligence in means, abstaining (at least for a season) from outward sins which were formerly practised, sigh and complaining of inward corruptions, earnest expressions of divine love to God—but in all this there is no true motive, and so conversion is not wrought.

2. That inasmuch as conversion lies in the will, neither knowledge on the one hand, nor sense on the other, can be mistaken for it. To draw over the will [from what] it naturally chooses to what it naturally dislikes, is the great difficult work, and the glorious power of God : and seeing this turning of the will is so directly contrary to flesh and blood, to interest, reputation, and especially the whole bent of that carnal principle there is in us, the sinner will sooner be brought to any thing than this, and will be found (being secretly withholden from a true conversion by his own naturally selfish, worldly, carnal will) to substitute somewhat else in the place of it, viz. resting either in a knowledge of gospel truths in his head, or in those sensible, passionate emotions and feelings, which, when gospel truths are first discovered to an awakened sinner, they commonly produce in his affections. These latter, viz. sensible feelings of delight,

are not to be slighted, they are only not to be abused, and the design of the Spirit's ministering them for the support of beginners, perverted by resting in them and stopping upon them, as if now the work were wrought. From this a double ill consequence is to be apprehended; the truly converted will be cast into great discouragement in the absence of these feelings, and the unconverted will think well of their state while they have them. In the mean time, the one and the other will be diverted by the pursuit of these sensible feelings, from pressing on in the work of conversion and sanctification. Wherefore great care must be had that neither knowledge nor feeling be put in the place of conversion; and the deceitful heart will be for any thing rather than that. However, these strong affections, usually wrought up in the beginning of a state [of grace,] are by no means to be discouraged; and perhaps the safest way will be that the instructor say little about them, but go on describing *conversion* and *sanctification*.

Secondly. Sanctification. This is a progressive work by which what was begotten is built up, and it contains the daily renewal of the graces on the one side, and the daily mortification of the body of sin on the other. Here three things must be noted.

1. The motive to sanctification which is the same as the motive to conversion, viz. a sense on the heart of God's love towards sinners in Christ. Whenever this is lost, sanctification stops, and this should be rather be noted, not only because sanctification, being the immediate fruit of a lively persuasion of God's

free love in Christ, can only be built up as that advances, but also because we are apt to lean on the work of sanctification as it goes forward in us, and so, in a degree, to lose sight of Christ as our righteousness. But now that sanctification be forwarded, and self-righteousness excluded, this motive must be kept in view, which as far as it goes, will effect the one and the other—as well forward the work as exclude boasting, because the sight of that pardoning love which builds up sanctification, will ever keep the sinner sensible he is not admitted to stand before God, but in the merits of Christ.

2. The work itself, viz. the growing up of the graces, and mortification of the lusts. The latter of these, it should be observed, is the consequence of the former, for as much as I love God more, I love the world less, and so of the rest. From whence it would follow that when there needs mortification of a particular lust, the direction be that the opposite grace be especially quickened.

3. The means, viz. self-examination, prayer, the word, and meditation, by which a more humbled mind and a more stedfast faith should be sought out. Humiliation on the sight of our sins, especially on the apostacy of our nature, must be continually exercised, and we must seek for a larger acquaintance with the fulness of Christ. The fruit of this will not be only a growing sense of our vileness, but also a discovery of our insufficiency, by reason of the power of sin abiding in us, either to do good or resist evil, and so a more steadfast living by the power of Christ.

Under these exercises will grow up a more continued watchfulness over our hearts, together with a desire to approve ourselves to God.

Sanctification will not go on without many discouragements falling under these heads — hardness of heart, unprofitableness, imperfection, failures, and falls. All these are the great means by which the Spirit more especially humbles the heart, shewing us our sinfulness and nothingness, and so bringing us to a more entire dependence on Christ. Wherefore as such complaints are made, the instructor must not fail to improve them to the following purposes.

1. To shew the person his exceeding sinfulness and insufficiency manifest herein.

2. To convince him of the unbelief of his heart ; he cannot trust Christ, now that he sees himself to be nothing.

3. To stir him up to sue for a stronger persuasion of Christ's power to justify the ungodly.

4. To guard him against impatience and murmuring, because he is a corrupted creature ; than which nothing argues more forgetfulness of the free gifts already received, or does more dishonour to the faithfulness and power of God to fulfil his promises in Christ. It hinders the work of grace in the soul, and begets a selfish frame, wherein there is little concern for God's glory, or man's salvation, with a strange unreadiness to promote the one and the other, and unfitness for any kind of duty, if not also a bringing Christ into disrepute by a peevish, fretful, sullen conduct.

Yet on the other hand, there will not be wanting consolations. From time to time the Spirit will be making gracious visits, quickening this and that grace in a delightful manner, shining upon and witnessing to his work in the soul, &c. concerning which there is need only to say, that if they be of the Spirit, (for Satan will transform himself) they will be accompanied by deep abasement and thankfulness, and will be followed by a more zealous and close walking. There is need only of this further caution, that they be not rested in, neither put up in the place of Christ, nor made occasion of pride or security.

These three things, conviction, faith, and its fruit in conversion and daily sanctification, constitute a Christian. Upon all these, this general object must be had in view, to humble the sinner, and exalt the Redeemer through the whole, by leading [the beginner] out of himself to Christ in every thing; and this observation should never be lost sight of by the instructor in the whole procedure.

One word concerning the communion. It is plain no one can be numbered among the faithful till he be converted, yet none but the faithful are actually within the covenant, nor consequently qualified to receive the seal of the covenant, which Christ has appointed as the instituted remembrance of his death. Nevertheless, in the first awakenings, people will be pressing for it, and if admitted will surely be resting upon it, and so greatly hurt and hindered by it. As far as I have seen, a year after will be full soon; by which time, unless they have been remarkably diligent

and had uncommon opportunities, they will scarcely have attained so much advancement in faith, and in knowledge of Christ, themselves, their work, and their enemies, as to be capable of receiving this seal of the covenant with suitable discernment. But whenever they come, it should be under the direction of their instructor, to whom, if they be right, they will submit the matter, and he ought to be satisfied, ere he permits them to come, or at least to have a good ground for supposing they have a good work begun in them."

It is impossible to read this Scheme of Private Instruction without intense admiration of the deep acquaintance with the human heart which it exhibits. Lest, however, the statements made therein should be too abstruse for persons in general, he appears to have simplified it for the use of his pious assistants in the work of edifying inquirers after truth, with the especial design of enabling them to put the necessary questions upon essential points. He accordingly drew up the following plain directions.¹

SECOND SCHEME OF PRIVATE INSTRUCTION IN THE
CHRISTIAN SALVATION.

I. *To beget a sense of guilt and condemnation.*

(1.) *You are a sinner*; either have lived careless and unconcerned about God, never having set in

¹ This paper appeared in the *Christian Guardian* for November, 1802, published at Bristol.

earnest about the business of religion ; or else your own conscience will tell you, that you have many sins of omission and commission to answer for. Try yourself by God's commandments. You have broken them all ; and, if you have lived carelessly, have been in a constant breach of them.

Question. Do you believe yourself a sinner, your heart convicting you ?

(2.) *You deserve to die ;* and this whatever your conduct has been ; for the wages of sin is death, of all sin. God is a just and righteous God and King, who will not suffer the breach of His laws to go unpunished ; and this punishment is eternal death.

Q. Do you think that you deserve this death ? Or, that it is prepared only for greater sinners than you ?

(3.) *You cannot turn away this punishment.* For, should you sin no more, your past sins would be your eternal ruin. But your best endeavours will be imperfect ; in the best day of your life you are impure and defiled.

Q. Do you think that you can make up the matter by doing better than you have done ? Or do you see yourself unable to help yourself, and in need of a pardon as a condemned criminal ?

II. *To stir up a sense of inability to do good.*

(1.) *Sin is your greatest enemy.* It hath consigned you to death, and made you unworthy before God ; and especially it hath made you unfit for heaven.

Q. Have you an earnest desire to be free from it ?

(2.) *You have no power of yourself to cast it off.*

Your inclinations are all naturally after evil ; you cannot of yourself do good. So God tells us, and your own experience may do the same.

Q. What sense have you of this weakness ?

III. *To set forth Christ's sufficiency.*

You see you are under *two great evils* ; the wrath of God, and the power of sin. Christ is able to relieve you in both : viz. by the satisfaction of His death from wrath ; and by the power of His grace from sin.

Consider, how vast is the undertaking to satisfy God's justice in place of man's eternal punishment ; and to work with the hearts of men to bring them to God. Observe the fitness of the Son and Spirit, as Divine persons.

Q. Do you believe that Christ is able to save you from wrath and sin ? And on what do you build that sufficiency ?

IV. *Of coming to Christ, or faith and repentance.*

1. You must be deeply sensible of the need you have of a Saviour in both these respects ; i. e. to save you from wrath and sin ; and that none other than He can save you.

Q. Are you thus humbly sensible of your want of him ?

2. You must be willing that He should save you from wrath and sin too. He will not procure your pardon, unless you be willing he should save you from sin ; i. e. unless you be heartily tired of it, and desirous to leave it.

Q. Are you willing to trust yourself to him ? And would you that he sanctify as well as pardon ?

V. *Of faith more particularly.*

1. You must trust upon Christ for the pardon of your sins through His blood ; not only of your past, but your present, rendering you always unworthy.

Q. Do you this ? What gives you relief from the fear of God's displeasure ? Do you continually rely on Christ's atonement, sensible of your own imperfection ?

2. You must trust upon the Spirit for strength to succour you against your spiritual enemies, and to forward you in holiness.

Q. Are you sensible of your own weakness ? And do you look unto the Spirit to lead you ? This submission of soul for both these purposes, is an act of faith ; and is best expressed by acquiescence in Christ, as King, Priest, and Prophet.

VI. *Of repentance, more particularly considered as the work of a person already come to Christ, or in faith.*

(1.) *Repentance is a hearty sorrow for sin ; i. e. a self-condemnation arising from a sense of its ingratitude, and producing especially a looking on it as the greatest of all evils.*

Q. How does your heart stand in these respects ? Especially, do you really find, by your practice, that you esteem sin as the greatest of evils ?

(2.) *It is a forsaking of sin.* This follows upon a hearty dislike of it, and sorrow for it ; and supposes an honest endeavour, through grace, to cast off sin, and to put on holiness.

Q. Are you heartily in earnest in fighting against

the corruptions of your own nature, in order to forsake all sins, whether in heart or life?

VII. *Of corrupt nature.* This consists,

First. In your natural backwardness to do good. You are naturally drawn away from God. It is not agreeable to your natural inclinations to love Him. This you must know from your own experience. There are three marks of love : 1. A willingness to please. 2. A delight in thinking on the person whom we love. 3. A pleasure in such an one's company. But, 1. You have a natural unwillingness to please God. 2. You are apt to forget God, and not to think of Him with delight. 3. You have a natural backwardness to converse with God in prayer, meditation, &c. &c.

Corrupt nature consists, *Secondly*, in your natural readiness to evil ; for, 1. You are naturally self-willed towards God and man. 2. You are naturally drawn after worldly things. 3. You are naturally lusting after indulgence.

Q. Have you experience of this perverse drift and inclination of your nature ? Do you see it hath occasioned all the sins which you have committed, whether by neglecting good or doing evil ?

Your corrupt nature, *Thirdly*, consists in this ; that, whilst under the guidance of it, you are spiritually dead, and unfit for the happiness of heaven, that is for the enjoyment of God. For you would find no joy in Him, whilst you find, 1. No willingness to please Him. 2. An averseness from thinking on Him. 3. A dislike to communion with Him. You want,

therefore, that your heart should be changed ; that your wilfulness, carnal lusting, and love of the world, should be subdued ; and that you should be brought to love God with all your heart ; which, you see, it is not natural for you to do. This renewal of your mind is needful to your eternal happiness, and is the great doctrine of gospel-repentance ; and consists in a constant subdual of your natural inclinations to please yourself, to enjoy the world, and indulge the flesh, and in a continual growth of love of God in the soul ; for it is love only will make us happy in the enjoyment of God. This is the work of the Spirit.

N. B. You must lay this to heart with much consideration.

Corrupt nature, *Fourthly*, is the principle of all sin ; 1. Of the inward sins of pride, disobedience, malice, envy, impatience. 2. Of love of worldly pleasures, riches, honour, esteem. 3. Of worldly lustings, sloth, excess, impurity, and of the various sins of the life.

If you are a penitent, you will be contending with this law of sin, and using all the means of grace to deliver yourself from it : particularly, you will be constant and earnest in prayer, coming to Christ to receive out of His fulness ; and you will be seeking to improve the love of God in your soul.

N. B. It is needful, with much clearness, to shew the natural love of sin, and the Christian temper in all its branches."

Upon all these points Mr. Walker considered it necessary that his converts should be well instructed, and give evidence of the practical effects thereof in their lives, before they were invited to seal the covenant in the solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Such was the mode in which Mr. Walker dealt with those awakened persons who sought the advantage of his private instruction ; performing with most exemplary judgment and discrimination, that important, but too much neglected branch of ministerial duty. His intimate knowledge of the deceitfulness of the hearts of others, was derived from an attentive observation of the workings of religion in his own, and thus he was enabled by experience, to detect those unsoundnesses in the Christian's character, which are frequently hidden under a specious gloss by the deceiver of souls. He knew the *real nature* of religious progress, and taught carefully the important truth, that whatever has a tendency to withdraw the fixedness of the eye of faith from Christ, deprives us of light from that star, which is our only certain guide through the trackless and dangerous ocean of human life. In two things he was supereminently distinguished — the detection of hypocrisy, and a power of instilling into his awakened hearers an acquaintance with themselves. Gifted with a peculiar penetration, he knew equally how to deal with the tender spirit, or to probe deeply into the corruption of the self-deceived, or the deceiver. One of his visitors for private instruction, was a young man who stated that he called to thank him for the benefit

he had received from his ministry, and to beg his advice. Mr. Walker immediately questioned him as to the knowledge he possessed of his own heart, when the youth expressed in general terms, a conviction that he was an unworthy sinner. Perceiving by his manner that he had never duly experienced that conviction, Mr. Walker at once entered into an explanation of the sinner's character, with a personal reference to the individual before him. He dwelt upon his ingratitude to God, the evil nature of the motives which had influenced all his actions, the fruitlessness of his life, the defilement even of his best deeds, and then added, "I fear you are secretly displeased with me, because I have not commended your good intentions and flattered your vanity."

"No indeed, Sir," he replied, "I feel extremely thankful for this striking proof of your kindness and regard."

The discerning minister had however formed a true judgment of the character before him. The young man acknowledged the next day that he had given a false answer, and that, chagrined by the little account Mr. Walker seemed to make of his professions, he had secretly determined to encounter no more the searching questions which exposed his shallowness, and brought low the vain imaginations of his heart. This experienced pastor had dealt wisely with him: he was flighty, ostentatious, and injudicious, but afterwards became an exemplary and useful Christian.

The faithfulness of Mr. Walker, both in public

and private, involved him in every species of opposition from the enemies of vital godliness. Foiled in an attempt to injure him with the bishop, they next tried to prevail on the rector of Truro to dismiss him from his cure. The applicants, being some of the wealthiest inhabitants of the place, found him willing to listen to their complaints, and he promised them to go to Mr. Walker and give him notice to quit his charge. He went; but like the Gaul who was sent to the Roman hero to despatch him in prison, retired startled and abashed at his lofty tone and high bearing. When the rector of Truro entered the apartment of his curate, he was received with that elegance and true dignity of manner, which was natural to one who had long been the charm of society, and became so embarrassed as to be perfectly unable to advert to his errand. He at length made some remark, which afforded an opportunity of speaking on the ministerial office and character, which Mr. Walker immediately embraced, and enlarged on the subject with such acuteness of reasoning and solemnity of appeal to his rector as a fellow labourer in the gospel, that he retreated, overwhelmed with confusion, and unable to say a word about the intended dismissal. He was in consequence reproached with a breach of his promise, and went a second time to fulfil it. He again retreated without daring to allude to the subject of his visit. He was pressed to go a third time by one of his principal parishioners, but replied—"do you go and dismiss him if you can, I cannot. I feel in

his presence as if he were a being of a superior order, and am so abashed that I am uneasy till I can retire." A short time after this, the rector was taken ill, when he sent for Mr. Walker, entreated his prayers, acknowledged the propriety of his conduct as a minister, and promised him his hearty support if he recovered ; but it is to be feared his resolution passed away with the alarm of illness. Never was a more striking instance than this of the power of religious consistency. Inconsistency alone makes us inefficient ; while a life suitable to our profession, attracts esteem from the godly, and repels the hostile weapons of our foes. It is when her priests are clothed with righteousness, that the saints of the church rejoice and sing ; and though the enemies of truth hate the light of that celestial dress, they retreat overpowered with the bright reflection of its beams.

The high moral conquest thus achieved by Mr. Walker, as well as perpetual accessions to his church, of those whom he had reason to hope were such as should be saved, endeared him with the affection of a father to his converts at Truro, and determined him, while Providence permitted, to spend and be spent in their service. Soon after his arrival amongst them, he had been presented by the trustees of his late patron, Mr. Kendall, to the vicarage of Talland, and had obtained leave of non-residence from the bishop. The genuine character, however, of his religion having engendered in him a great tenderness of conscience, he began to have serious scruples about the justifiableness of deriving any emolument from a

charge, the duties of which he was unable to perform. With his usual calmness and deliberation, he weighed in his own mind the question of non-residence and pluralities, consulting able writers on the subject; and after mature reflection, coupled with earnest prayer, he decided to resign his preferment. Although this resolution reduced his finances so as to bring him into exceedingly low circumstances, he did not hesitate for an instant to act upon it, and told his friends that a weighty burden had been removed from his conscience. He bore with cheerfulness all the inconveniences of his diminished fortune, relinquished his accustomed comforts, and went into humble lodgings with accommodations of the plainest kind. While in this condition, he had four offers made him of preferment, but declined them all. He could not leave his devoted flock; and he would not receive from any portion of the vineyard where he laboured not. All his desires centred in longings for God's presence in his soul, and a blessing on his ministry. He thus exhibited in practice his own description of the contented Christian. "No desire is there of other treasure but God, nor is there any want grievous while the light of God's countenance is enjoyed. This changes rags into purple garments, sweetens the coarse and homely meal, satisfies *that the dwelling be narrow and inconvenient*, and makes the heart dance for joy, while beholders regard, some with pity, and some with scorn. O, ye poor great ones; poor, because strangers to God, poor, and without quiet, how little cause have ye to boast that ye fare sump-

tuously ! This man hath delicacies which ye cannot relish, a continual feast he hath satisfying his soul, while your very heart is troubled with all the contrivances of art to please, and all the elegances of luxury to indulge you ; you cannot feed upon content as he doth, because ye know not God, for it is his privilege, having nothing, to be as if he possessed all things.”¹

The resignation of his vicarage was not the only instance of Mr. Walker's genuine disinterestedness. There resided in the neighbourhood of Truro, a young lady of accomplished manners, beauty, fortune, and piety, whose religion attached her to his ministry, while a superior education and good sense enabled her to appreciate his attainments. There was every reason to believe that she would have readily accepted an offer of his hand, and that their union would have been most happy. A friend anxious to see him relieved from his humble circumstances, by an alliance so suitable in every respect, ventured to advise him seriously to consider whether he ought not to avail himself of such an opportunity. He made no reply at the time, but a few days afterwards remarked—“ you spoke to me lately about Miss ———. I certainly never saw a woman whom I thought comparable to her, and I believe I should enjoy as much happiness in a union with her, as it is possible to enjoy in this world. I have reason also to think she would not reject my suit.” Here he paused, and

¹ From a MS. sermon found among his papers.

added with great feeling and seriousness——“ still it must never be—what would the world say of me? Would not they imagine that the hope of obtaining such a prize, influenced my profession of religion? It is easy, they would say, to preach self-denial, and heavenly mindedness; but has not the preacher taken care to get as much of this world's good as he could possibly obtain?” “ Sir,” he again said, with emphasis, “ *it must never be.* I can never suffer any temporal happiness or advantage to be a hindrance to my usefulness.” Whether, in coming to this resolution, he exercised a sound discretion, or otherwise, it is impossible to determine, unless every circumstance of the case were before us. One thing is however certain, that he denied himself, took up his cross, and followed Christ. His conduct was like that of the celebrated Fletcher, of Madely, who refused a living because “ there was too little work and too much money.” It is probable that when Mr. Walker's friend came to him with the suggestion just alluded to, he determined to think it over with prayer for divine direction; and doubtless he came to the conclusion, that as a minister he must in all things give incontestible evidence that God and his service were the first objects of his heart. That such were the feelings of his mind, is evident from the following words addressed to the converts of his flock. “ I know that ye sometimes need such evident proofs, when one how or other, ye are in doubt and sadness. Keep this by you then, as a sure ground of confidence, that while ye do so choose God as to prefer him to

all things, refusing them all in comparison of him, ye cannot but be his. This would be one of the most common, and also of the safest and most profitable evidences of a good state. It is *common*, ye may always have recourse to it; it is *safe*, it cannot deceive you; it is *profitable*, because it will always keep you on your guard where you are most in danger, and put you upon a still greater mortification of the law of sin you have in your members." This sentiment Mr. Walker reduced to the most scrupulous practice; he daily trimmed his lamp, and proved the purity of its sacred oil, by the unclouded brightness of its burning. A quaint farmer once observed to a gifted and eloquent, but not very exemplary divine, "Sir, you light a good candle on a Sunday, and put it out all the week;" but the lustre Mr. Walker shed upon his weekly path, was even more luminous than the brilliancy of his sabbath exhortations. In every sense of the expression, he was a "burning and a shining light."

His holiness of life was the fruit of constant and deeply spiritual communion with God. He was emphatically a man of prayer, and reaped the rich fruits of that prevailing exercise. He once mentioned to a friend who pressed the question earnestly, that he was sometimes favoured in prayer with such rapturous views of the excellency of divine things, that he almost enjoyed a foretaste of heaven. He added, however, with singular wisdom, "I never mentioned this for three reasons. *First*, it might have held out to my people a false standard of religion, causing

them to substitute feeling for holiness ; *secondly*, it might have discouraged some pious and humble persons, who from various causes are destitute of such enjoyments ; and *thirdly*, it might have encouraged those presumptuous enthusiasts, whose arrogant pretensions I am always aiming to expose." Thus did this vigilant pastor weigh the probable effect of every word he uttered, desiring to serve God and edify his people, by laborious diligence, watchful prudence, and uncompromising self-denial. The discipline of his flock will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES, LAY AND CLERICAL.

FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY AT TRURO.

THE natural powers of Mr. Walker's mind, would have rendered him singularly qualified to contrive and carry into effect a due discipline over those, of whom he might, in any circumstances, have been constituted the leader. He possessed both the gift of penetration into character, and the spell of influence over the human mind, and brought these rare qualities into admirable exercise in the spiritual management of his people. By the signal blessing of God upon his life and ministry, the number of awakened persons in Truro became augmented, beyond what it was possible for him to bring within the limited circle of private advice and personal attention. He accordingly, in the year 1754, conceived the idea of forming his converts into a religious society, of which he gives the following account in a

letter¹ to his “dear and much respected” friend, Mr. Adam, of Wintringham. “It was in the year forty-six that I first came to this town, bringing with me those principles (if so I may call them) with which I left the university ten years before. Here God had provided better and quite different things for me, than those which engaged me to come hither. Nothing was further from my thoughts, than that I must oppose those very pleasures and engagements of life, the prospect of which led me to Truro. It was in about a year, that principally by the means of a pious Christian friend, whom I found here, I was brought to the knowledge of the ways of God. By and by, I began to deal with the people as lost sinners—my discourses were levelled at self-righteousness and formality, and Christ was preached unto them. From that time God hath done great things for us, and is doing. The number of those who have made particular application to me, inquiring what they must do to be saved, cannot have been less than eight hundred, of whom, though far the greater part have drawn back, yet I have the pleasure of seeing a very considerable number about me, who, I trust, are sincerely seeking God. The beginning of this year, it was found proper to form a religious society, the members of which, being persons who have given some proof of their faith, are about eighty.² I will delay further particulars, till I hear it would be agreeable to you to be informed of them.

¹ Vide *Christian Observer* for 1802.

² They were afterwards greatly augmented.

Only, in general, the eyes of the country are upon us ; and the influence of what God has done here, has reached unto many places near, and at some distance. However, Sir, it may be needful you should be especially informed of one circumstance, relating to my manner of proceeding with those who have been brought under impressions, and have made application to me. From the beginning, I have not been content with giving them advice ; but have required them to come frequently to me, singly at first, and since their number hath been larger, two or three together, that I might be informed of their progress and difficulties, and assist them with suitable directions. This personal communication hath been greatly blessed ; and I have reason to believe nothing hath contributed so much to our success as this.”

The society here mentioned was formed with consummate prudence, and care to avoid those obvious evils, which have been so blindly overlooked by others in the classification of their converts. Mr. Walker first inquired into the religious state of the members with great attention, and then made two divisions of them ; one, composed entirely of men, into which no female was admitted ; the other, of married men, their wives, and unmarried women, from which all single men were excluded. The objects of their association, and the necessity of a suitable demeanour, were ably laid before them in the following paper,¹ read at their first assembly.

¹ This paper I have taken, not from the short and interesting memoir prefixed to Mr. Walker's *fifty-two sermons*, but from

“ CONSIDERATIONS LAID BEFORE THE MEMBERS,
AT THE OPENING OF THE SOCIETY AT TRURO,
BY S. W. 1754.

You expect, my friends, that I now lay before you the design of this society, and give you some cautions concerning it.

The design is threefold— to glorify God—to quicken and confirm ourselves in faith and holiness—and to render us more useful among our neighbours.

First--As a society, we shall be better able to glorify God; for hereby we shall bear a more public and convincing testimony to the cause of Christ, and make a more avowed profession of his name and gospel in these evil days, than we could do when separate. Every one of you desires that his kingdom may be further enlarged, and better established than it is, which, by joining your hands together to promote so desirable an end, will be most effectually brought about. Take, then, these cautions for this purpose:—

1. Let each look upon himself as associated with others, to promote the honour of their common Master.

2. Never, therefore, be ashamed of him, or his doctrines, or your fellow-Christians in this society.

an original MS. for which I am indebted to the kindness of the late J. B. Wilson, Esq. of Clapham. This will account for a difference of expression in the two documents; in substance they are much alike.

Only, in general, the eyes of the country are upon us ; and the influence of what God has done here, has reached unto many places near, and at some distance. However, Sir, it may be needful you should be especially informed of one circumstance, relating to my manner of proceeding with those who have been brought under impressions, and have made application to me. From the beginning, I have not been content with giving them advice ; but have required them to come frequently to me, singly at first, and since their number hath been larger, two or three together, that I might be informed of their progress and difficulties, and assist them with suitable directions. This personal communication hath been greatly blessed ; and I have reason to believe nothing hath contributed so much to our success as this."

The society here mentioned was formed with consummate prudence, and care to avoid those obvious evils, which have been so blindly overlooked by others in the classification of their converts. Mr. Walker first inquired into the religious state of the members with great attention, and then made two divisions of them ; one, composed entirely of men, into which no female was admitted ; the other, of married men, their wives, and unmarried women, from which all single men were excluded. The objects of their association, and the necessity of a suitable demeanour, were ably laid before them in the following paper,¹ read at their first assembly.

¹ This paper I have taken, not from the short and interesting memoir prefixed to Mr. Walker's *fifty-two sermons*, but from

“ CONSIDERATIONS LAID BEFORE THE MEMBERS,
AT THE OPENING OF THE SOCIETY AT TRURO,
BY S. W. 1754.

You expect, my friends, that I now lay before you the design of this society, and give you some cautions concerning it.

The design is threefold—to glorify God—to quicken and confirm ourselves in faith and holiness—and to render us more useful among our neighbours.

First—As a society, we shall be better able to glorify God; for hereby we shall bear a more public and convincing testimony to the cause of Christ, and make a more avowed profession of his name and gospel in these evil days, than we could do when separate. Every one of you desires that his kingdom may be further enlarged, and better established than it is, which, by joining your hands together to promote so desirable an end, will be most effectually brought about. Take, then, these cautions for this purpose:—

1. Let each look upon himself as associated with others, to promote the honour of their common Master.

2. Never, therefore, be ashamed of him, or his doctrines, or your fellow-Christians in this society.

an original MS. for which I am indebted to the kindness of the late J. B. Wilson, Esq. of Clapham. This will account for a difference of expression in the two documents; in substance they are much alike.

3. Demean yourselves every one as his disciples, by walking in all humility, meekness, heavenly-mindedness, and charity, after his blessed example.

4. Keep yourselves heedfully from all things that may disgrace your profession, or this society—such as pride, in a conceit of your own knowledge and attainments, or that you are admitted members of this society—valuing yourselves on any distinction of place or circumstances, sinking into a worldly frame, or declining into sloth and idleness, practising the least dishonesty, or conniving at it in others ; making sinful compliances to avoid shame, or promote your temporal interests, falling into lukewarmness, and losing your first love, and absenting [yourselves] from, or slighting public ordinances.

5. Often, especially before or after temptations to any of these, reflect that you belong to a religious society, instituted to promote the honour of Christ.

Secondly—The second design of this society is to quicken, comfort, and build up yourselves and one another in your holy faith. By this means we shall be better able to maintain the war against our enemies, who are all united against us, and to grow in grace ; as we may hope, by this association, we shall have the Spirit to assist and strengthen us ; we shall have the benefit of mutual advice, and reproof ; shall be more hardy in opposing temptations besetting us from a wicked world ; shall walk under a peculiarly happy restraint, from the observation and eyes of our brethren upon us, and be assisted by the mutual prayers of each for the rest. To this end,

1. Watch over one another in love.
2. Be willing to hear of your faults, and thankful for reproof.
3. Watch against any disgust against any of your brethren; and if any arise, without delay tell the party, and if that fail, the director.
4. Desire the prayers of one another, and pray for one another.
5. Be sure not to rest on being members of this society, as if that could be your security either from falling here, or for heaven hereafter.
6. Guard against the least decay in your love for Christ, zeal for his honour, and love to souls.
7. Preserve continually in your minds, your obligations to these things, from your relation to us as members of this society.

Thirdly. The third design of this society, is to promote our usefulness among our neighbours. Hereby we make ourselves more discernible. People cannot so easily be quiet in their sins, when they see united societies testifying against them by their practice. Good examples are naturally more prevalent than reproof or advice, especially if the first be wanting. To this end,

1. Be careful to set such examples to all about you.
2. Think not to gain any by making sinful compliances.
3. Discountenance all things which may be snares to your neighbours, such as public-houses, gaming, and many diversions and sports, which are not convenient nor of good report.

4. Shew all love to men's souls, and enforce that by a care of their bodies.

5. Avoid all quarrels and disputes, which usually begin in pride or impatience, and end in anger, malice, and revenge.

6. Do not be angry with those who blame this society. If they point out any thing wrong, reform it, if not, meekly and silently bear with them.

7. Despise none in your hearts, because not members with you.

8. Shew no valuing of yourselves because you are.¹

Let the following motives encourage you to observe the above rules.

1. Real disciples must do more than nominal professors.

2. The Spirit is promised to comfort and assist those who walk by these rules.

3. You will have peace and satisfaction in your own consciences.

4. You are engaged in the most honourable service.

5. You will hereby promote the best of interests, and honour the best of masters.

6. He will acknowledge you as his servants, and reward your labours and perseverance, in the day of his appearing.

¹ To this, according to the memoir previously mentioned, the caution to each was added—"Never speak of yourself as a member, unless with a view of doing others good." It is, however, not in the MSS.

Such were the well digested and truly pious considerations, submitted to the associate Christians of Truro, at their first meeting. The effect of such a union must, humanly speaking, depend upon two things, its leader and its rules. No man was ever more competent to manage a body of this description than Mr. Walker: his rules, taken from the old manuscript before mentioned, were as follows.

A COPY OF THE ORDERS FOR THE RELIGIOUS
SOCIETIES AT TRURO, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
THE REV. MR. S. W.

Instituted February, 1754.

1. In the single men's society, no woman to be admitted.

2. In the married men's, their wives and other women, but no single men.

3. That the sole design of this society, is to promote real holiness in the heart and life of all who belong to it, in a dependence upon the Divine Power, and the conduct of the Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to advance and perfect all good in us.

4. That in order to our being of one heart and one mind, and to prevent whatever may engender strife, as well as to remove all occasion of offence being taken against us, no person be admitted a member of this society, or allowed to continue such, who is a member of any other religious meeting, or

follows any other preaching than that of the established ministry in this town. That none be admitted members, but such as are inhabitants here and communicants, and that no person at any time be introduced, but at the request of the director.¹

5. That the members of this society do meet together at a convenient place, one evening in every week, and that they go home at nine o'clock.

6. That every member endeavour to give constant attendance, and be present at the hour of meeting precisely, and that whoever absents himself four meetings together, without giving satisfactory reason to the society, shall be looked upon as disaffected to it.

7. That to prevent confusion, no person be removed from the society but by the director, who shall be present on such occasion, and that any person do apply to him in cases [where] he judges such removal needful; and that a disorderly carriage, or a proud, contentious, disputing temper (the greatest bane to Christian love and peace) be sufficient ground for such complaint and removal.

N. B. By a disorderly carriage, we mean not only the commission of gross and scandalous sins, but also what are esteemed matters of little moment in the eyes of the world, such as light use of the words, *Lord, God, Jesus, &c.* in ordinary conversation, which we cannot but interpret [as] an evidence of the want of God's presence in the heart. The buying

¹ The director was Mr. Walker.

and selling of goods which have not paid custom. The doing needless work on the Lord's-day. The frequenting ale-houses or taverns without necessary business.

8. And considering the said consequences of vain amusements so generally practised, we do in charity to the souls of others, as well as to avoid the danger of such things to ourselves, think ourselves obliged to use particular caution with respect to many of them, however innocent they may be, or are esteemed to be, in themselves ; such as *cards, dancing, clubs for entertainment, play-houses, sports at festivals and parish feasts*, and as much as may be parish feasts themselves ; lest by joining therein, we are a hindrance to ourselves and others. And that no person may remove from one place or society to another, without the consent of the director.

9. That with the concurrence of the director, the major part of the society may have power to make new orders, when need shall require it, but that the proposal for this purpose be made by the director, and that any member may consult him about it before the day of meeting.

10. That every member do esteem himself peculiarly obliged to live in an inoffensive and orderly manner, to the glory of God and the edification of his neighbours ; that he study to advance in himself and others, humility and meekness, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, love to God, gospel repentance, and new obedience, in which things Christian edification consists, and not in vain janglings. And that in all

his conversation and articles of his faith, he stick close to the plain and obvious sense of Holy Scripture, carefully avoiding all intricate niceties and refinements upon it.

11. That these orders shall be read over at least four times a year by the director, and that with such deliberation, that each member may have time to examine his own conduct by them.

Not only did Mr. Walker submit these strict rules to the society, but during the time of its meeting, he assumed that due control of the people which belongs to the minister, and prevented all improper trespass on his province, by reserving to himself the sole performance of the devotional exercises. For this purpose, he drew up what he called the "office of devotion," for the weekly meeting. He commenced with reading six appropriate sentences of Scripture,¹ and the collects of our church: "*Prevent us, O Lord*"—" *Blessed Lord who hast caused all Holy Scriptures,*" &c.—"*O God, forasmuch as without thee,*" &c. After this, the whole assembly seated themselves, and a portion of the bible was read, followed by the confession, "*Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men,*" &c. succeeded by the Lord's prayer, in which they all joined kneeling. This concluded, Mr. Walker alone offered up a prayer composed by himself. It com-

¹ These were Psalm lxxxix. 8; vii. 12; Eccles. xii. 14; Proverbs xxviii. 13; 1 John ii, 1, 2; Psalm xcv. 6.

menced with the collect—" *Almighty and everlasting God who hatest nothing that thou hast made,*" &c. and continued in a strain of fervent supplication, for help to cultivate the graces and exhibit the conduct recommended in the rules.

They next sung a psalm, after which the director, or in his absence some person appointed by him, read an instructive treatise, which was followed by a prayer selected for the occasion. The whole assembly upon rising, stood in silent attention to hear an exhortation to humility, drawn up for the purpose by their minister. After this they sang again, and the director said, "*It is very meet, right,*" &c. adding, "*Therefore with angels and archangels,*" &c. in which all united. The director then concluded the meeting with "*The grace of our Lord,*" &c. and all departed in order to their houses.

A meeting of serious people thus conducted, upon principles of church discipline, under the watchful eye and controlling hand of Mr. Walker, could not fail to be productive of most happy results. Their director so well knew how to combine dignity with affection, tenderness with fidelity, and superiority with meekness, that his followers were insensible to the strength of the rein by which he guided them into the paths of knowledge and duty. He was himself a bright example of the Christian virtues and acts of self-denial enjoined upon his people, and thus obtained a power to restrain or excite them, which no precepts, unaccompanied by actions, could ever have achieved. Powerful objections have frequently been urged against

such associations among the serious parishioners of clergymen, and it may be fairly argued, that without able management, their tendency is to produce a greater aggregate of evil than of good. Laymen officiating in the presence of their authorized minister, and endeavouring to rival or eclipse him in prayer; women forgetting the modesty of their sex and the propriety of their situation, in the enthusiastic utterance of feelings real or imaginary; youths put forward because of a *gift*, to the destruction of all humility; ignorant and illiterate persons permitted to give vent to unintelligible rhapsodies, exhibit violations of decency and order, such as it is surprising that any leader of a sect should ever have permitted, much less encouraged. That some of the most devoted champions of religion could have looked, as undoubtedly they did, with complacency on such caricatures of its sublimities, only affords a melancholy proof of the tendency of party spirit to distort the clearest vision. Mr. Walker foresaw and obviated these objectionable results, and so arranged his regulations, that no motive but a desire to gain and do good, could well operate with those who asked to be admitted into the Truro classes.

When he wrote to the wise and excellent Mr. Adam, of Wintringham, on the subject, he received from him a reply,¹ in which that judicious man in-

¹ Vid. *Christian Observer*, 1802 and 1803. The original letter in the writing of Mr. Adam, has been placed in my hands since the publication of the first edition of this memoir.

quires, “ how do you manage to avoid disputes in your society ? and what method have you of terminating them amicably when they do arise ? ” Lest, however, he should be understood as at all discouraging the laudable proposal to bind together the people of God, by the ties of a discreet union, he adds, “ you will understand me right ; I have not the least thought of damping the design : Heb. x. 25. I take to be fully to the purpose, and much good may be expected from it. Indeed truly religious persons will hardly be kept asunder. But upon the whole it is a delicate affair, and requires all the steadiness, prudence, and piety of an able conductor, to keep the members of it knit together in the bonds of Christian love, considering the variety of tempers and the frailty of the heart. May it answer your most sanguine expectations ! May God daily add to it, and make it a blessing to the place where you are, in the pious examples, Christian lives, and brotherly charity of all who belong to it. For the eyes of many will be upon you ; and graceless, ill-judging, by-standers, will be ready to take occasion from the miscarriages or infirmities of a few, to involve all in one common censure.” To this letter Mr. Walker replied, “ the hint you gave me about the society I endeavoured to improve, by reading that part of your letter to them, and taking occasion from thence of enforcing the passage referred to. I have no doubt you will pardon that freedom, and will be glad to hear that it seemed to contribute to the thing you aimed at, love and unity. It hath been our singular blessing, that we have had no

disputes amongst us, which, under God, we ascribe to the nature of our constitution, which is, *that no one is to be talking there but myself*. That private persons should be speaking in a large company, we had observed from the methodists, to be so great a temptation to conceit (and the next step to that is always envy, strife in the heart, and contention) that we dared not venture upon it. Our way is, to take advantage of one passage and another of Scripture, to give and impress some piece of advice suited to a society ; which office I ever take upon myself. Conversation they have enough elsewhere."

In order to secure to the members of his society the advantages, without the dangers of being permitted to speak in their meetings, their wise and careful minister instituted assemblies of them in small numbers, to converse freely upon their trials, consolations, and experience. These little parties were arranged to suit the convenience of those who desired mutual edification from unrestrained intercourse, were not limited to any particular hour, nor suffered to interfere with their usual temporal avocations. They sometimes therefore met early in the morning before service on the Sabbath, or between the services, and also on week-day evenings after their business had ended. There never were to be present less than five or more than eight, and these persons were called on to exercise an affectionate inspection of each other's conduct, and to administer reciprocal encouragement or reproof as the case required. These limited associations were suitably classified, and the members

distributed according to age, station, circumstances, and sexes. The married met with the married ; the men with the men, and the women with the women ; and the same rule was also extended to the single, in order that, their cases being as nearly similar as possible, their sympathies might be so also. Although Mr. Walker was not present on these occasions, he was careful to provide for their usefulness and comfort, and drew up for their direction a little treatise, called “ Regulations, and Helps, for promoting religious conversation among Christians.” The regulations consisted of directions for preparation, conversation, humble demeanour, self-examination, subsequent reflection, and confidential secrecy. They were to open their minds freely to one another, and to give their opinions in turn, taking care that no inquiry was actuated by mere prying curiosity, but with a single aim to correct faults, warn of dangers, relieve despondency, and stimulate to Christian progress. To guard against improper questions, interruptions, or jealousy, each filled in turn the office of *inquirer* for the day, whose business it was, according to a plan drawn up by Mr. Walker, to elicit an account from his associates, of their Christian experience and conduct. If any one had observed signs of inconsistency in another, he was directed to mention it, without reserve, that explanation might be given, or the error corrected. The rest of the time was passed in Christian conversation, when the inquirer concluded the meeting with prayer, to which they occasionally added singing. Mr. Walker, with his usual wisdom,

gave them the following admirable directions for prayer.

SOME HINTS FOR PRAYER FOR THE SOCIETY IN THEIR
PRIVATE MEETINGS, BY THE DIRECTOR'S ORDER.

1. He who leads the rest need not be over solicitous about the manner of expression, but begging to be impressed with an awful and reverential sense of the presence of God, may in some measure endeavour to lose sight of his fellow-worshippers, that his desires may the more sincerely ascend unto God. Neither need he bind himself to the method of this, nor always to the whole matter, but after short recollection, take of it what God may be pleased to enable him.

2. We are to humble ourselves as a society of professing Christians, who have peculiarly distinguished ourselves by our profession, and yet by our unseemly behaviour, as well as unfruitfulness, have not brought honour to the gospel of Christ; each one in his own particular [case] looking on his own sins as the cause of the Lord Jesus threatening to remove his gospel in its power, purity, and fulness. We are therefore to pray for the continuance of it; and in order to this, we are to plead his free, rich, and unchangeable mercy and love, in his everlasting covenant. We must plead the honour that redounds to Christ by the preaching of the gospel, the danger also as well as the worth of precious and immortal souls, and of our

own in particular, if the light of the gospel be withdrawn.

3. We must pray for our minister in particular, whose relation to us, though he be absent, still continues, and whose doctrines we are bound in conscience, when agreeable to the Scriptures, to follow—that God would direct and keep him in all his ways—that he would by grace keep him steady and resolute to all the holy purposes he has brought himself under, and has been enabled to be an example of among us—that he may eminently hold forth the light of the glorious gospel in doctrine and conduct, wherever he is, or wherever he goes—that he be no ways dismayed by the opposition he may meet with from the world and the devil—that he may drink largely of the comforts of the Spirit in the trials he may undergo, and may be richly supplied with the treasures of the gospel, and if it be the will of God, may return unto us with the fulness of it.

4. We must pray ardently that the grace of the Spirit may attend the ministration in the public congregation to which we belong, and bless the means to the profiting of our own souls, that we may still grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For this end it will become us to pray, that we be kept from all undue prejudices [in favour of] him or them, who may minister the ordinances to us, because of their seeming eminency in gifts and graces [above] others; always remembering that the Spirit worketh as he will and by whom he will, and therefore that we must

always look above all means for his blessing on them.

5. For our neighbours who are prejudiced against us ; that God would be pleased to awaken their souls, and grant them repentance unto life ; that he would turn their hearts to us, and ours effectually towards them. Here we shall find hard work ; we must not be therefore content with our most passionate supplications for them, unless afterwards we find ourselves ready to do them good for evil. When we behave towards them with meekness, modesty, and humility, then we may indeed look upon ourselves as the children of our Father which is in heaven, and may, under the present dispensation of providence, be enabled to do them more good than ever, though we may be apt to think otherwise ; for the Lord's ways are in the sea, and in the deep they are wisely hidden from us.

6. This may be a time of trial to separate the wheat from the chaff ; we must therefore pray that we be kept from falling, but especially from totally falling away from the profession of the gospel ; that we be not scandalized, if some should be suffered to apostatize, but cry for stronger faith to believe and live upon the promises of the covenant, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church of Christ ; that he is to be with them unto the end of the world ; that the Lord knoweth them that are his : and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

7. We must pray for sincere and unaffected love

to one another; without this we shall fall to nothing.¹

The extraordinary influence and consummate judgment of Mr. Walker, enabled him to work this machinery of discipline, without perceptible or injurious friction. He communicated to it the unction of a warm and devoted spirit, and regulated its movements with a skilful hand, having himself first superintended the adaptation of its various parts. The success was so complete, that his good friend, Mr. Adam, urged him to strict watchfulness over his own heart, lest he should be puffed up by what God had done by him. He received this admonition with becoming meekness, and begged him to continue his "seasonable and acceptable" counsel, observing, "it is a very dangerous thing to be particular any way; and when we are grown up to a becoming disregard of the reproaches of the world, it is but too easy a step to become vain of them. Perhaps it is more dangerous still to be in the direction of a number of serious persons, and yet worse again to hear of the commendations which injudicious zeal will be throwing in our way. I have indeed much need to watch over my spirit, perhaps more than a high degree of preferment would have called upon me to do."

While this work was going on in his own parish, Mr. Walker endeavoured to stimulate the exertions

¹ I received this interesting paper through the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Wildbore, of Falmouth. Like many of Mr. Walker's valuable documents, it is drawn up with much more attention to matter than to style.

of his brethren around him, and in several instances with success. He conceived and carried into effect the design of a union among the pious clergy in his neighbourhood, for the purpose of mutual edification, encouragement, and advice, as to pastoral duties. It was called the "Parson's Club," and the original number of members was seven, afterwards increased to eleven, who met for the first time on March 18, 1755. They generally assembled once a month at each other's houses, and their whole design was to "consult upon the business of their calling," which, the excellent founder of the society informs us, was "done all along with so much freedom, love, and unanimity," that he was "even astonished at the remembrance of it." With that propriety which always marked his conduct, he sought and received the sanction of his diocesan before they assembled, at least as "far as the words *do not forbid you* may be interpreted to go." They came together at the house appointed at ten, and separated at six, dining at two, with a stipulation that the fare provided should on no account exceed a couple of plain dishes of meat. The host was director for the day, and conducted the discussion of the subject proposed, preventing interruption, or the introduction of any new question, till the one under consideration had been fully settled. To guard against a superficial or hasty treatment of the principal topic before them, each member was required to bring his view of it drawn up in writing, in such a form as he considered would be most useful to his brethren. Thus with the advantage of the

master spirit of Mr. Walker at their head, the society became a source of real benefit to its members. A great outcry was, however, raised against it, on the alleged ground of methodistical bias ; a charge most unfounded, as every one of its members was sincerely attached to the doctrines and discipline of the church of England. Mr. Walker recommended to his associates a string of searching queries, as to devotedness, zeal, self-denial, design in joining their brethren, dependence on divine help, and conscientious inquiry into the motive of every ministerial action. These were drawn up with his usual ability and knowledge of the heart, and were thankfully received, as also a form of prayer compiled chiefly from the Liturgy and Jenks's Devotions. Many fluctuations took place in this happy union, occasioned by deaths, removals to distant places, and in two instances by a fear of the violent opposition they had to encounter ; still upon the whole it conferred upon the clergy who belonged to the club, and their parishes, a lasting advantage.

In order that any meeting of this kind may be permanently useful, it is necessary that the spirit of it should be well kept up ; but from want of regulations like those of Mr. Walker, and due preparation upon subjects discussed, clerical clubs are apt to degenerate into a lamentable barrenness. As early as the year 1699, such conferences were recommended by Archbishop Tennison, in a circular addressed to the bishops of his province ; and perhaps the best rules ever drawn up for their management, are those of Fletcher of Madely. Frequent as they are in these days, there

yet remains the want of a sufficient stimulus. When strangers meet together, at first they are influenced by fear of superior attainments in their brethren, and prepare what they have to say ; but as soon as they have sounded each other's depth, they are apt to become careless, and it not unfrequently happens that both director and members are equally undecided as to a plan of discussion. Unless some mode be discovered by which the interest in these meetings may be kept alive, they will confer little real good on individuals coming together, or the church at large. If also the clergy composing them, do not attend prepared to communicate knowledge which is the result of reading, meditation, and prayer, their conversation will naturally decline into such a thinness of matter, that the time so passed would be more profitably spent at home, than in associations where there is no likelihood of reaping the harvest of research and well-grounded experience.

The effect, however, of the Cornish union seems to have been eminently important. Mr. Walker states in a letter to Mr. Adam, that they were in the enjoyment of the truest prosperity. "The Lord," he says "is still with us, and whatsoever we take in hand, he makes it prosper. Great things is he doing in a neighbouring town which I heartily praise him for. Their worthy minister, a member of our club, speaks the truth boldly, nor is dismayed by the strife of tongues. Numbers flock together, as to hear him, so to converse and pray together in a house hired for that purpose. There is of them by this time a con-

siderable number of names, and of such as hold forth the word of life in their conversation. Through much evil report we all gain ground ; and I suppose there are not less than ten thousand to whom we preach the gospel, one and another of us." One of these devoted men was appointed to preach at the Bishop's Visitation, and failed not to embrace that important opportunity for the exercise of Christian fidelity. The circumstance, and the outcry it raised, are thus mentioned by Mr. Walker in the letter from which the last quotation is taken. " My friend was appointed to preach at the Bishop's Visitation last year. He did so, and called on us to exert our ministerial function by preaching Christ, studying the Scriptures, &c. with a word or two on pluralities and non-residence. He spoke modestly but freely, and as the Bishop [said] falsely, who took occasion in his charge to mention the preacher, and insisted, contrary to what the sermon insinuated, that the clergy both preached Christ and studied the Scriptures. The matter was again resumed after dinner, when the outcry of the many was strong, and he was particularly attacked for speaking against pluralities. His defence was an appeal to the Judgment Seat. The sermon was understood to be that of the club, though indeed it was not." There can be no doubt, notwithstanding, that it had the approbation of the club, though it proceeded from the pen of an individual member, and that a determination to be faithful animated the entire body. The fearless minister here alluded to, seems to have possessed the essential

ingredients of useful exhortation, modesty, and freedom. It is the absence of the former in too many instances, that renders the latter an offence. He who would have his hearers receive with meekness, must exhibit it strongly in his own person and style of address. The objurgatory language adopted by too many from that place, which is not only to be the seat of truth, but of propriety and humility, is altogether contrary to the spirit of genuine Christianity. The picture we draw should be true to nature, but the effect may be spoiled by the bold tastelessness of the frame. It may be also remarked here, that "an appeal to the Judgment Seat" should at least awaken solemn inquiry in the breasts of many who labour not in the vineyards which enrich them. Before it, all such must appear, and happy will it be for them if they seriously consider now, the answers they will be able to give in the great day of inquiry, and in the presence of the Weigher of actions, and the Searcher of hearts.

CHAPTER IV.

CATECHISING, USE OF THE SEASONS KEPT BY OUR CHURCH.

THE town of Truro, under the ministry of Mr. Walker, presented a delightful example of the happy effects which may be produced on a Christian community by our Church's discipline and doctrines, wisely enforced and spiritually expounded. Among other instruments of good, so ably called into action in that place, was the long-neglected habit of "*Catechising*."¹ This custom, valuable at all times, and particularly so in days of

¹ I find appended to a manuscript letter of Mr. Walker to Mr. Adam, which the latter evidently sent for the perusal of a judicious friend, the following query. "Mr. Walker asks me what I think of his writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to represent to him the low state of *Catechising* in the Church of England, and the necessity of applying a suitable remedy. What do you think?" The person thus consulted by Mr. Adam was, I believe, Archdeacon Basset.

extreme ignorance, had fallen into almost universal disuse, “by which,” Mr. Walker observes, “more than by any other thing, the kingdom of darkness and sin was established in England.” The young people of Truro were divided into three classes, of the following ages : under twelve ; between twelve and fifteen, and between fifteen and twenty, who were instructed at stated periods in private, and then catechised in the church, “an hour after sermon,” before an audience sometimes amounting to five hundred people, who were “for the most part much impressed.” When they had done, Mr. Walker took a single point, which he explained “as shortly as possible, enforcing it afterwards as largely and warmly,” as he could, in order to influence the daily practice of his hearers. Herein not only the young persons, but all present were considered, which was found to be a most effectual mode of getting at the hearts of parents, who were attracted to Church by a natural interest in the performance of their children. The continuance of this exercise was at least an hour. Towards the middle a solemn pause was made, and the young were questioned as to what they had heard, which was repeated again at the end. “The young people,” says Mr. Walker, in a letter to Mr. Adam¹, on the subject, “are without fear or shame ; and at that age so quick, that if any thing I have said hath slipped them, (which is very seldom) I find it hath been through my defect rather than their fault.” “I have

¹ *Christian Observer*, 1802.

had," he continues, "the unspeakable pleasure of seeing many of them brought into a very serious way under this means; particularly I remember in the first year, about fifteen of them, whom I had seen in the beginning of the season trifling and laughing, while I was speaking to them." Mr. Adam's plan was something similar to this; and when he did not catechise, he read on the Sunday afternoon, one of the most instructive of the Homilies,¹ explaining and enforcing its most material parts. In this work he was happily encouraged by Mr. Basset the good arch-deacon of Stowe, whom he called "an industrious labourer in Christ's vineyard, exerting himself to the utmost to revive the antiquated doctrines of the church of England; for which he does not escape scot free; but he is a stout champion for the truth, and has grace enough to fear nothing."

Mr. Walker not only found the church catechism, of which he was one of the ablest expounders,² a

¹ Wherever the Homilies have been circulated and explained, they have been made most useful. To the truth of this, the agents of the excellent Prayer Book and Homily Society can amply testify. Instances are perpetually occurring of their being blessed of God to the conversion of souls, particularly among the lower classes, who read them with the keenest enjoyment, entering with much relish into the unadorned style of their composition, which renders them so suitable to plain capacities. They say they can understand them better than many of the other pious, but less simple tracts distributed among them.

² Vid. his Lectures on it. These have been lately republished by Hamilton and Adams, under the able inspection of the Rev. E. Bickersteth. There are also added to them four sermons by Mr. Lawson.

valuable manual of instruction, but he also used with great effect the *seasons* appointed to be kept in our establishment. These have been long too much neglected and forgotten ; but Mr. Walker succeeded in making them occasions of arousing slumberers, and quickening the awakened to increased activity.

In the beginning of Lent, this good man called the attention of his flock to personal repentance, and, indeed, never suffered any anniversary of importance to pass over without a suitable application. On the 30th of January, he was accustomed to make solemn reference to sins more peculiarly to be denominated national. Were this last subject adverted to constantly, on that or any other appointed day, by the clergy of our land, the custom would probably be attended with a visible blessing, and perhaps give a powerful check to any notorious vices practised by a large part of the community, such as drunkenness, profligacy, gaming, and sabbath-breaking. Two causes, however, concur to prevent the adoption of this custom—a want of due inquiry on the part of ministers into the nature, causes, and effects, of the sins of the country ; and on that of the people, a lack of humility, and an unwillingness to sit in the dust under a sense of national sin. The evil of selfishness preys insensibly on the hearts of Christians, who think they do enough in caring for their own souls. The *holy seed* of the nation strive not sufficiently to become *the substance thereof*.¹

¹ I have omitted the extracts from sermons on these occasions inserted in the first edition, because it is my intention to publish

It is one part of the excellency of the ceremonial of our church, that nothing having a wholesome tendency to impress the mind, escaped the penetration of its framers; the reason it has not been more powerful in its effects, is a want of full comprehension of the scheme as a system, and the consequent neglect to use it skilfully. The strong personal application of the topics of each season, to the hearts of Mr. Walker's hearers, was with divine assistance, one of his great secrets of efficiency. In this way, all subjects connected with Christian doctrine, practice, and experience, came in regular succession before his people, enforced by an authority they respected, recommended by an establishment they loved, and elucidated by the word of God, from the exhaustless treasures of which the church alone has received her true riches. The great duties of repentance for our own sins, and those of our fellow countrymen, were most strongly urged on stated occasions, to which the people looked forward with eagerness, and were applied in a manner calculated to make a lasting impression. To give additional force to his exhortations, Mr. Walker lent his sermons, which were always carefully written, to the educated part of his congregation for their private perusal. They were also read in the Society, and were often transcribed by the members. Many of these copies still remain, as monuments of the diligence of the preacher, and the attention of his hearers.

separately from his Life, a collection of Mr. Walker's Miscellaneous Writings, in which they will be found entire.

All the church holidays were thus duly improved at Truro, so that our services being fully understood, were valued as they deserved, and triumphed in their scriptural purity and force, over the public vices of profane opposers. The lectures, not only in Lent, but at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide,¹ were of a character so heart-searching, that when they failed to convert, they awed the sinner into outward decorum, and actually prevented the recurrence of various scenes of profligacy, by which those festivals had been disfigured, whose design was to call men to a vivid and thankful remembrance of the incarnation, sufferings, and victory of Christ. Strolling players, cock fighters, and others of a like description, ceased from the streets of Truro during these seasons, and its inhabitants became ashamed of open desecration of such solemn occasions, though the majority remained destitute of the grace, which would have led to the purer joys and happier pursuits of vital piety. By setting apart certain days for celebrating events of high importance, our reformers guarded against the possibility of their being overlooked; and if at such periods our congregations are taught to anticipate with interest, the subjects that will be pressed upon their attention, numbers of them will be greatly edified thereby. Ministers must carefully watch against the tendency of the human mind, to allow religious habits to degenerate into mere form; a weakness of our nature, which will affect even the better part of every flock.

¹ These are still in existence in MSS.

The remedy however depends much upon the teacher. If he brings out his old sermons, and reads them year after year, all interest in their matter will decline ; but by ever applying anew to his periodical task, he will discover that the Scriptures can supply him with power to clothe questions apparently exhausted, with an endless variety. Each time the dew of heaven descends upon the same soil, it imparts to it a new freshness and fertility ; undiscovered beauties spring up to arrest attention, and command the deepest interest. No man better knew this property of the word of God, or used it more skilfully than Mr. Walker. Scripture, like the ocean, remains essentially the same, while the light never plays upon its surface without varying its hues ; but the dull mind of man loves earth too well to contemplate its beauties, in that spirit of enjoyment, which imparts to the bosom of a believer such pure and rapturous delight.

If we availed ourselves of this characteristic of the bible, we might, like the wise minister of Truro, cause our people to hail each returning season as a source of fresh comfort to their souls. They would, in succession, be reminded of mercies, pointed to examples, warned of dangers, and instructed in doctrines ; and by following the routine of our church, all chance of omitting any vital question would be certainly avoided. All that Mr. Walker effected by such means, is within the reach of every clergyman, if in the spirit of prayer, he will be guided by the rules of our reformers. Instead of contending for our establishment by invec-

tives against its enemies, let us set every wheel of the great machine to work. Let the people be well instructed in the true excellence of our Liturgy ; let them be more earnestly exhorted to imbibe its spirit, and to seek to feel and live up to its petitions, and the ark of God will go forward in majesty and triumph, and though shaken by the motion of those who bear it, will never fall.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAILY CHURCH SERVICE.

IN order to impress upon his people the importance of joining in the prayers of the church, with a full appreciation of their excellence, Mr. Walker addressed to them a series of sermons on the nature and use of prayer. He desired, with the fervent interest of a watchful pastor, that his flock should be well qualified to bear their part in public worship, “in a manner becoming the majesty of the God they served, the decency and dignity of his house and family, and highly improving and profitable to the begetting and confirming religious habits within them.” He therefore, after preparing their minds by the lectures before mentioned, carefully explained to them the *Daily Service*, and *Litany*, in order “to shew the spirit of devotion with which their several parts ought to be performed, and also how expressive they are of the

sentiments with which a pious heart is warmed and enlivened." It too often happens that due stress is not laid by ministers upon the devotional parts of worship, nor are our congregations always sufficiently reminded of their value. That the faithful and wise curate of Truro was not chargeable with this omission, will be evident to all who read the following admirable treatise on

THE DAILY SERVICE.

" You will remember that God, successively considered in the various characters of being infinite in power, in majesty, in dominion, in wisdom, in justice, in goodness, is the object of your devotion, which rises upon you as you view him in one or other of these excellences ; and as you consider yourselves weak, ignorant, defective, sinful men, strongly convinced of your vileness, dependence, and obligations. Now, let us suppose ourselves, in the first place, approaching publicly the divine presence, that with one mouth we may confess the vileness, which, upon comparing *ourselves* with *God*, and our *actions* with our *duty*, we do every one of us at heart lament and bewail, and earnestly beseeching infinite goodness to avert the punishment we so well deserve. This [penitent approach to his Creator] by the creature of his power, the sinful object of his wrath, the child of his mercy, is the first step that a sinful creature, well aware of what God is, and what himself ought

to be, must make towards God in his addresses to him. Confession¹ therefore, very properly bears the first place in our church service; and this, with the other parts of prayer, is introduced in such a manner, as is exactly fit to call up the true spirit of devotion. Hear then with earnest attention, the awful sentences of [the bible] which open the public worship, and you shall be soon convinced that, as ‘the Scripture moveth you in sundry places’ to do, nothing can so much become you, as that you should ‘confess your manifold sins and wickedness.’ You shall be convinced, that ‘if you say you have no sin, you are miserably deceiving yourselves;’ for so many are the transgressions you have been guilty of, and your sins are so constantly bearing heavy upon you, that you cannot but tremble at the correction of God’s anger, which must assuredly bring you to nothing, nay which is even at hand to take vengeance on you. [You will see] therefore, that nothing but a speedy repentance can save you, nor is there any other way

¹ In order fully to understand the nature of this illustration of the Daily Service, it is necessary to observe that Mr. Walker, in his preparatory lectures, described prayer as consisting of (1) Confession, (2) Praise, (3) Petition, and (4) Thanksgiving. He now designs to show how admirably these are united *in order* in the morning and evening services. The Sermons on Prayer will be given in the Miscellaneous Works, when they appear. I have preferred, however, retaining the Treatises on the Daily Service and Litany in their old places in the Life, because I am endeavouring to give a *connected* view of the mode in which their author worked and explained the *machinery* of our Church.

of avoiding God's entering into judgment with you, in whose sight no man living shall be justified. While therefore 'your spirit is broken and your heart rent,' you must 'arise and go to your Father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son,' much less to be treated as thy child. If these sentences were regarded, and had their due influence, they could not fail of stirring up a dread of just punishment, an earnest desire of being restored to God's favour, and a humble, unaffected persuasion of our vileness in his sight. Under such a conviction, we should with all readiness fall in with the minister's exhortation, and giving up all pretence to self-righteousness, all 'dissembling and cloaking our sins,' fall down before 'Almighty God, our heavenly Father, confessing them with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart,' if by any means 'we may obtain forgiveness of the same through God's infinite goodness and amazing mercy.' If by this time a high dread of most mighty justice, which you see due to you for your sins, has taken possession of your souls, and you stand confounded and condemned before God and your own consciences, (as the importance and weightiness of these reflections being considered, methinks you cannot but be,) you will be ready humbly, seriously, and heartily, to do honour to the Lord, in the open acknowledgment of your sinfulness before that congregation, with which you are assembled for the great and exalted purposes of religious worship. When you are deeply affected with the

odiousness, the ingratitude, the danger of sin, and your mind is impressed with shame and fear ; whilst your heart is troubled and your spirit within you desolate of comfort, you shall long to pour out your soul before God, in unfeigned confession of your guilt and overflowing sorrow. Fall then low on your knees before God, and with the convicted congregation lift up your humble voice to him, in expressions arising from a purity of heart which shuts out all hypocrisy, and you then shall feel, I may safely assure you, all the comfortable force of those words of confession which you speak from your souls. How will your hearts melt when you set before you that ' Almighty God ' who, ' most merciful ' as he is, you scarcely dare to call your Father, from whose ways, although he be the ' Almighty and most merciful,' you have heedlessly and presumptuously ' strayed like lost sheep, following the devices and desires of your own corrupt hearts,' doing your own pleasure, and ' leaving undone ' his, in repeated instances ; in-somuch that ' there is no health ' nor wholeness in you, but you are altogether odious, sinful, and abominable ! How passionately will you consider whom you have been offending, and against whom you have lifted up yourselves in a series of disobedience ! How warmly will you plead with your heart because of the iniquity that is in you ; how devoutly will you resolve against doing any more such great wickedness, and how solicitously, when your heart is thus in heaviness, [will you] look up to your everlasting rock for pardon and protection ! You shall then want neither a

pressing earnestness, nor a deep humility, when you sue to God for mercy. 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, miserable offender' that I am; spare me, O God, I confess my faults; restore me, I am penitent; restore me, not for my deserts (I am sadly sensible they are nothing) but according to thy promises, declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. Above all things also 'grant me, O most merciful Father,' that my future life may be, unlike the past, 'godly, righteous, sober,' not to the dishonour but the 'glory of thy holy name.' This will be the faithful language of your hearts, most sensibly affected with the shame, sorrow, and dread of sin.

[Under these impressions,] with how incomparable a consolation will God's sentence of absolution fall upon you! Arraigned and convicted before the Lord, without the least circumstance to offer in mitigation of the divine justice, how will your heart dance for joy when the glad tidings of peace and salvation are published to you! [What will be your comfort] when, 'Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' declares his acceptance of you for the sake of his Son, when he solemnly professeth that he 'desireth not the death of any sinner, but rather that he should turn and live,' and when his minister, by God's authority and commandment, pronounceth 'absolution and remission of your sins' upon 'true repentance and unfeigned belief of the gospel.' Seeing also that so much depends on your true repentance, you will need, under your present penitent circumstances, no argument to lead you to 'beseech

God that he will grant it unto you,' that he will 'give you his Holy Spirit' to purify you from all iniquity, both of body and soul, so that the present services you are about to pay 'may please him,' and that the 'rest of your lives,' formerly so miserably sinful, may be 'pure and holy,' and that 'at the last you may come to his eternal joy through Jesus Christ.'

It may not be amiss now to observe, that in as much of the service as hath been hitherto considered, we have been in a very awakening manner called to a fixed and settled persuasion of our sinfulness and guilt, and of God's anger against us in this estate, both which are the groundwork of that part of prayer which consists in confession. We have further been assisted with terms of grief very expressive of such a sense of guilt before God, and extremely fit to confirm such an abhorrence of it on our minds, as can alone make us worthy of God's remitting to us the punishments thereof. Thus the true foundation of repentance is here established, which makes the necessity of faith in Christ Jesus abundantly evident, there being no other hope of pardon to a self-condemned offender. [Moreover] whilst the wretch, in so fearful an expectation of deserved punishment, cannot but hope for forgiveness as the only circumstance which can support him in so sad a distress, this is largely promised and strongly confirmed to him, from the mouth of that God whose vengeance was so much dreaded. Thus you may observe, how well this office of confession is fitted to give us a high fear of God's justice, which is due to all sinners, to convince every

one of us that we are such, and to make us lay hold of eternal life offered us in Christ Jesus—no trifling parts, you must acknowledge, of the Christian salvation.

Set now the avenging God before you, as reconciled to you for the sake of Christ Jesus ; as willing to forgive your iniquities, and to blot them out of his remembrance ; as having solemnly engaged to you that he will do so, upon your repentance and faith ; and you may discover how properly the prayer of our Lord concludes this office of confession. You have been lamenting your wickedness and God's anger, and now he is reconciled to you through his well-beloved : you are now therefore emboldened to call upon him, by the endearing title of *Heavenly Father*, through the gracious promise of pardon now given you, whose name you must needs now desire to ' hallow,' reverence, and adore, earnestly begging that his ' kingdom may come,' and Christ Jesus rule universally in your hearts, to the defeating of all attacks of your spiritual enemies, and to the establishing of those holy purposes you have now so warmly taken upon you ; so that you may be zealous in doing, and patient in suffering God's will, relying on the assistance of his Holy Spirit for strength and ability, and on his mercy for pardon of past ' trespasses,'—' trespasses,' the remembrances of which are so terrifying, that you cannot but devoutly pray to be delivered from the danger and punishment of them, even to him whose is ' the kingdom' over all things, and who hath alone ' power' to relieve and protect you,

and to whose mercy you ascribe the praise and the 'glory' of doing so, 'for ever and ever.'

I have now done with the first part of prayer, viz. *confession*, and have shewn in some measure, how excellently the church service answers the end and nature of the duty, how expressive it is of the sentiments of a contrite heart. It was before remarked, that the more intimate consideration of God's excellences, whilst the mind was engaged on its own imperfections and vileness, afforded matter of confession; but that [these] looked upon in another point of view, and regarded as being altogether lovely and adorable in themselves, become the subject of praise. This, it was further remarked,¹ might very naturally follow upon confession; inasmuch as the reflections suggested to us by the incomparable goodness of God, so ready to pardon the great and crying offences of his creatures, must of course lead us to consider more attentively his other perfections, the event of which must needs be the offerings of praise. We surely can never be so well at liberty to exercise our minds in the pleasing duty of praise, as when we are just set free from our solicitude for our sins, by God's gracious promise of absolution and remission.

Praise, then, which naturally follows upon confession, in the progress of devotion, is made to hold the next place to it in our service. But then we do not enter upon this office so abruptly, as if we were capable all of a sudden to leave earth and go up to heaven.

¹ Mr. Walker here alludes to his preparatory sermons on the nature and use of prayer.

No, it takes us with our mouths stopped, as it were with a sense of guilt, and invokes God's assistance that they may be so 'opened, and our hearts' so enlarged, as that both with one and the other, we may 'shew forth his praise.' [Still however] we are supposed to be looking back, with a kind of pleasing dread, on the dangers we are just got out of, and seeing them, as it were, but just behind us, we cannot but still call upon God that he will 'make speed to save us, and make haste to help us,' till at length, being released from the chains of our sins, and being set upon our feet, we address ourselves to the service of praise, with the highest exaltation both of soul and body. Praise¹ was said to be an exaltation and triumph of the soul, on a nearer view of God's excellences ; the understanding being swallowed up of God's immense perfections, the will most strongly engaged to dwell upon and enjoy them, and the affections with a kind of holy violence, struggling to express the exceeding great and awful joy, with which they are carried forth towards a Being so unspeakably desirable. Let us now see if the service we are considering, doth every way well express and promote this spirit of praise. The business now is to raise the soul to a more noble contemplation of God : how can this be so effectually done as by the most excellent hymn which follows, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost : as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world

¹ This is again an allusion to the sermons on prayer.

without end ?' To whom shall we render the tribute of praise, if not to that great Being who was, and is, and is to come ; to that eternal ' Father ' and cause of all things, who naturally uses his incomparable perfections to do good, whose infinite power is employed in benefiting his creatures ? To whom but that eternal Son and Spirit, whose essential goodness, in conjunction with the Father of mercies, first contrived, and does effectually complete the redemption of lost man ? To whom but that glorious Trinity, which was from the beginning the song of angels in the morning of creation, and ' is now and will for ever be ' the theme of their praise ? Whom but that blessed Trinity shall we praise here, which it will be our unspeakable, eternal happiness to adore hereafter ? Were it possible to conceive a higher subject of praise, than the consideration of God, the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier ; any thing which might more effectually quicken the soul to a sensibility of God's excellences, it might have been more properly made use of in this place. But what this hymn suggests is surely the most exalted notion we can view God in :—let this therefore engage us to contend with each other in ' praising the Lord,' and by every tongue let ' his name be praised.'

The first six verses of the Psalm of Invitation, which now come to be repeated, being the lively sentiments of David's inspired heart, are wonderfully fitted to raise the soul to the exercise of praise. ' O come ' let us lift up our voices in the assembly, and ' sing unto the Lord ; ' let us with the whole

bent of our affections magnify and rejoice in the Rock and strength of our salvation. 'Let us come before' his august presence (in which we all now are) 'with thanksgiving, and shew ourselves glad in him with psalms' of praise. For 'the Lord' Jehovah is a great, infinite, and incomprehensible 'God, and a great King,' absolute in his dominion, subjecting all the hosts of heaven and earth to his uncontrollable will; he is 'above all gods.' 'In his hand are all' the distant corners of 'the earth, the strength of the hills is his also.' 'The sea,' which he binds in fetters of sand that it shall not harm us, 'is his;' he created and 'made it,' and 'his hands prepared the dry land,' to be an habitation for the sons of men. 'O come' then, since he is so great and glorious, 'let us worship and fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker' and everlasting strength. The consideration of God's greatness, supremacy, and power, thus keeps up the spirit of adoration, and enables it to fix itself more nearly on God in those psalms which are, or ought to be, next the employment of our tongues and hearts. It must be observed concerning them, that the most spiritual devotion will find them expressive of its highest conceptions of God's glory, and the most sluggish cannot but be affected with some lively, though transient motions towards God in the use of them. We should all of us so join in them, as not only to be ready to shew forth our voice of adoration with the psalmist, but to confirm and enliven the most exalted notions of God upon our minds. They are indeed usually composed on such

subjects as abundantly suggest matter of praise ; such as the wonders of God's works in the beautiful order and harmony of the creation ; the regularity of the animate and inanimate world ; the wisdom of Providence in guiding and governing all things ; the extraordinary appearances and manifestations of his power, majesty, wisdom, and justice to his people ; his especial protection of his servant David. These and the like matters, which afforded occasion of praise to the psalmist, may either equally inspire us with the same sentiments, where they are of general concern, or may otherwise be easily made our own, by an application of them to our own circumstances.

It would be endless to enter into a practical inquiry after the truth of what is here laid down ; and it is the more needless, as many amongst you must have experienced, how great and powerful helps these psalms are, to draw up the soul towards God in acts of adoration ; and any of you may be convinced of the same by a diligent and attentive use of them. I shall say no more of this part of praise, but only observe that the posture in which the psalms ought to be used is standing, which is as natural a bodily expression of the lifting up of the heart to God in praise, as kneeling is of humility in confession or petition. The soul whilst it praises God, exalts itself to the highest stretch of its capacity, and the upright posture of the body serves to signify such an inward exaltation. Praise requires such a rapture of the mind as admits of no bodily indolence ; and you may

observe among the Jews, even dances were thought no improper signification of this animated devotion.

When the mind hath been thus engaged for a while, in magnifying God with a great fervency of affection, which is the proper use of psalms, these being the productions of holy men, when they were influenced with a nearer and more glorious view of the high, the great, the righteous, the merciful, the provident God—when the spirits languish under such exalted meditations, and the soul is no longer able to keep itself on the wing, then another service of a somewhat different kind, but calculated to raise the same spirit of devotion, is made to take place. [At this moment], how fit portions of the Old Testament Scriptures are, to suggest to the understanding the highest sentiments of God, may be easily discovered upon a proper attendance to what is the subject matter of them. That therefore they are to be heard with a solemn, reverent attention, is visible ; and when they are so heard, from the wonderful transactions of the historical parts of them ; the creation of the world ; or the destruction of men and beast, in the universal deluge ; or the interpositions of the Almighty hand, in the preservations and punishments of Abraham and his descendants ; in the chastisement and prosperity of those who rose up against them, as well as from a variety of other particulars, the majesty of God's uncontrollable power must be fixed upon the soul. The same history also will not fail of giving the most awakening terror to the divine justice, every where so amazingly fearful in its doings, as cannot

but make the most self-sufficient heart shrink at the prospect. The time would fail me to speak of that important vengeance upon the whole race of man, except eight persons, who, heedless of God, and thoughtless of the threatened destruction, intent on their pleasures, as uncontrolled by any law as any modern people may be, and eating and drinking, were swept away by the flood. Nor can I stay to mark out the circumstances of that avenging fire which came down from heaven, and by a general destruction of the wicked people and the polluted cities, made them altogether a great and eternal example of justice. Whilst [moreover] the power and justice of God are made evident in the history of his works, the Scriptures of the Old Testament give us sufficient reason to conceive the highest opinion of his wisdom and goodness. These are so very plain, in the manifestations of his will from the foundation of the world, in his government of mankind, particularly in the civil, religious, and moral parts of the law of Moses, in the excellency of that virtue recommended in the books of Job, Solomon, and elsewhere, and the exact and most astonishing prophecies, that he who runs cannot but read in the plainest and largest characters, the high wisdom and gracious goodness of God. After this it will be easily granted, that nothing can give us such affecting notions of the divine perfections, as the history of God dealing out his excellent qualifications in his transactions with men.

By passages of the Scripture, therefore, you see

exalted notions of God may be abundantly conceived, and the intermitted exertions of praise take fire again, and burn with redoubled ardour. Who can see God in the glorious view in which we have now seen the Scriptures representing him to us, without feeling his inexpressible perfections upon the soul, without being caught up by transporting thoughts to the highest heaven, without having every desire and affection upon the utmost stretch to comprehend more of the most excellent divine nature? Then, if ever, with enlivened devotion shall we 'praise God and acknowledge him to be the Lord,' most worthy to be praised. With 'the whole earth,' we shall look up to and worship the 'everlasting Father,' to whom 'all angels cry aloud, the heavens and the highest powers therein, Cherubim, Seraphim continually do cry,' 'holy' Father, 'holy' Son, 'holy' Spirit. 'Lord God of Sabaoth, thou fillest heaven and earth with thy glory,' and makest us all, even angels and men, happy by thy presence. Then, if ever, we shall boast ourselves in the 'Father of an infinite majesty,' in 'the Holy Ghost the Comforter,' in the 'honourable, true, and only Son,' who 'king of glory' and 'everlasting Son of the Father,' as he was when he took on him to deliver man, despised not the 'virgin's womb,' nor the 'sharpness of death,' that he might 'open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.' Then, in short, will it be the only earnest longing of our souls, to be numbered with the saints in a nearer enjoyment of God's glory for ever and ever.

Inspired with the same sentiments, may we also take up the song of the blessed virgin,¹ and our souls may 'magnify the Lord,' and our spirits, filled with most glorious apprehensions of God's admirable greatness, rejoice in him our God and our Saviour.

What hath been said concerning the Old Testament Scriptures, may be applied with a still more interesting propriety to the New, inasmuch as in these the great God represented in the former, is brought nearer to us, and an amazing account of the interposition of all the powers of his divinity to make us eternally happy, are there laid open to us. Good God ! what a subject of praise is the redemption and the sanctification of lost, wicked, miserable man ! Can we coldly look upon the divine being so mighty, so willing to save ? No, surely we cannot be indifferent to so important a concern. All which the gospel records, is [matter] of wonder and astonishment ; a scene of justice, goodness, power, and wisdom most adorable ; a most mysterious scene of humbled divinity and exalted humanity. Hear then the message of salvation, and when you have tasted and seen how gracious the Lord is, you shall instantly shew forth his praise, and find the hymns appointed after the second lesson, very expressive of the lively notions you have of God.

With these reflections I leave the whole of this part of the service with you, being confident, that if

¹ This occurs in the afternoon service after the like exercise of reading the Old Testament. Mr. Walker might also have noticed the *Cantate Domino*.

a most affecting sense of God's excellences has been raised upon your minds, by the most fit means you see the church has made use of to do so, your reflections will fix themselves in a kind of gentle complacency on God's perfections, and you will be ready with old Simeon to depart in peace, now that 'your eyes have seen God's salvation prepared before all men.' Thus if it is possible for any outward means to stir up enlivened sentiments of God, in which the foundation and exercise of praise consist, I hope the daily exercise of public devotion now taken notice of, is qualified to effect that purpose.

It will be proper to observe now, what progress we have hitherto made in the scheme of devotion. When we first presented ourselves before God, we could not but see, feel, and lament the incomparable load of vileness and wickedness, which produced humble confession and deprecation of God's vengeance. While this lay upon us, we were utterly unfit and disqualified for any other part of prayer. God's sentence of absolution was therefore pronounced, and being thus discharged from our sins, way was made for us to contemplate the glorious excellences of God, and we were supplied with the most affecting arguments to, and expressions of, praise in the psalms and hymns; whilst from the lessons, new matter was thrown in upon us, to inspire us with, and to keep up the spirit of this vigorous devotion.

Whilst therefore the powerful arguments of praise are warm upon us, let us go on to the consideration of our wants, which were said to be the subject of

the third part of prayer. But first let us remark what was above taken notice of, that a confidence in God (seeing from the reflections we have been just making on his perfections, he appears alone to be the fountain of all kinds of blessings to us,) that he will upon our earnest request, supply us with them, is a most necessary qualification to our petitions. If therefore a faith not only in God's ability, but also willingness to relieve us from the great wants we experience in both parts of us, our bodies and our souls, be needful to make us offer up our petitions, as it is plain to common sense that it is ; then the appointment of the creed or belief, in this place of the church service, is a very necessary introduction to the part of prayer we are about to consider. Not only in this respect doth it seem most proper, as looking forward to the petitions which follow, but also as looking backwards to the reading of God's word which immediately went before it, upon which it very usefully follows, whilst the reflections on God's perfections and gracious dealings with mankind, as recorded in the Scriptures, especially in the gospel, are fresh upon our minds. Looking behind us therefore to God's word, and before us to our wants, let us be convinced, that with great propriety we are here called upon to make confession of our faith ; that we believe in one Almighty God, who is distinguished into three persons, the Father our Creator, the Son our Redeemer, the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier, by whom we and the whole church may have remission of our sins, and the hope of a blessed resurrection

to eternal life. Now, if we are thoroughly convinced of our wants and our inability to supply them, we must with devout thankfulness, great seriousness, and assured confidence, join in this confession of faith, which it is visible, is the only foundation upon which our petitions can possibly be granted. For, observe in whom you believe—God the Father Almighty, maker and preserver of heaven and earth. Who but this kind indulgent Father can give you what you need? You believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, who lived, died, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and all to relieve you in your greatest wants. Is not therefore his satisfaction and mediation, the groundwork of all the favours you expect at God's hand, the very corner-stone of all your hopes? You believe that you shall be raised again to an everlasting life, either of happiness or misery: it is the Spirit of God can alone qualify you with the heavenly disposition you want to fit you for future happiness; to whom therefore, but this powerful Spirit, can you apply for this necessary grace and assistance? Without a lively faith in the Father, Son, and Spirit, you see it is in vain, it is folly to pray; let us therefore engage you to confirm your faith, by an honest and open profession of these articles of your belief, and let this be the foundation of your petitions being offered up to God, and give you that confidence in him which is necessary to make them heard and answered.

Being well convinced, from the high opinion we have by this time conceived in our minds of God,

that he only is able to help us, and having openly professed our belief that he will help us, let us go on now to lay before him the wants which lie upon us. Now, in these particulars, it was observed,¹ the nature of petition, or prayer more properly so called, did consist—in an affecting sense of our necessities both temporal and spiritual, and a lively persuasion of God's ability and readiness to supply them. Let us remember then that we are coming before God, to plead with him the wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked condition we are in, and to improve the conviction we feel of our various wants, and our dependence upon God's favour, who is the author and giver of all goodness. I conceive the service of the church will in this particular also help us ; viz. to a more perfect knowledge of our wants, and to proper expressions of them to God, very fit to increase our confidence in his support. The priest begins this office in a usual and very affectionate blessing of the people, 'the Lord be with you'—more especially enabling you by his grace to present your petitions to him. This divine presence the people also pray for, to direct the minister in offering up the common petitions both of him and them. After this act of mutual charity and intercession, they both address themselves to prayer, being invited and admonished to do so by the earnest exhortation of the minister, 'let us pray,' yea let us offer up our petitions to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, beseeching him that

¹ In the preparatory lectures on prayer to which reference is made all along.

he will have mercy upon and help us in our various distresses, for the sake of Christ, in whose words, as being taught us by him, and therefore carrying more weight with the Father, we open the great scene of our wants before God.

We have now therefore placed God before us in his most endearing relations to us as Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; we have considered him as the bestower of our daily bread (all things of every kind we need) upon us, and we have made a general representation of our wants, infirmities, weakness, and dependence. These you know are the principal qualifications of *petition*. Let us, therefore, under this persuasion of God's loving-kindness, pour out all our necessities in his presence, lay before him the various wants we experience, and earnestly and faithfully implore his help. We are supplied with assistances for doing so, in the little sentences which follow the Lord's prayer, wherein from an affecting sense of our misery, we loudly call upon God to 'shew his mercy upon us,' and to grant us 'his great salvation,' and deliverance out of the mighty evils we labour under. Particularly we implore temporal blessings, by beseeching the Lord to bless and 'save the King,' and all our magistrates, and always mercifully to 'hear us when we call upon him' for their prosperity. We pray for God's ministers who are the instruments of our spiritual blessings: we intercede for Christ's heritage: we beg the blessing of peace, because God alone hath the direction of great events, and he alone fights for us, and secures us from the violence and

cunning of our enemies. Finally, we call upon the divine grace to cleanse and purify our hearts from all iniquity in our addresses, and that he will not take his Holy Spirit from us, on so important an occasion. How important the occasion is, will be visible if we do but cast our eye back upon the large catalogue of our wants, already more amply set out to view—our want of pardon at God's hand, of the benefit of Christ's death, of divine grace to comfort, enlighten, and direct our minds—our want of grace to convert us from sin, to rescue us from temptation, to enable us to do good, to bring us to glory, and to beget in us all heavenly virtues, such as love of God, charity, mortification, contrition, sincerity, faith—our want of things temporal, the protection of God's providence, deliverance from our enemies, from God's judgments, from our afflictions, and defence against all evils. Thus we see ourselves beset with wants of every shape; and the collects which now follow, whilst they help us to pray unto God for his protection, at the same time set home upon us these very wants in a lively manner, and lead us to God, through faith in Christ Jesus for relief. We are constantly put in mind of these essential parts of petition in every collect, which is always so framed as to contain an application to God considered as great, or powerful, or merciful, according to the matter of the following petition. Hereby the divine ability to succour us is strongly impressed upon our minds; and afterwards follows a hearty representation of our wants, which we are taught not to expect to be relieved from, but

through the merits, and for the sake of Christ, under, and in whom, we have confidence with God that our prayers will be granted.

It would be too large, and after what has been remarked, I hope a needless task, to consider the weekly collects with this view. Let it suffice with relation to these to observe, that they all contain very earnest petitions to the fountain of all grace, for some grace or blessing of high importance to ourselves or others. My business is to shew that the collects of the daily service are fitted to answer the same end. You may take notice that the sum of all our wants, relating especially to ourselves, is here reduced to two great particulars ; viz. *peace* without and within us, and *grace* to resist all temptation and to lead godly and holy lives. Without question, if these were obtained, we could have nothing more to ask for at God's hand ; and accordingly these are made the subject of the two first daily collects at morning and evening service. The first of those for the morning, is for outward peace and defence from the assaults which do daily beset us, and this is grounded, you may observe, on God's alone ability to protect us. Let us see now if it be not altogether expressive of such a confidence and signification, and of such a want of protection. We therein address ourselves to God, who by his overruling Providence is the author of peace, and by the excellence of his nature the lover of concord, in a practical knowledge of whom, standeth our eternal life, and safety against all attempts of those who would prevent us from so great

a blessing, and in whose service is perfect freedom from all dangers. [We implore him] to defend us his humble servants who flee unto his protection, if not *from*, yet *in* all assaults of our enemies, that trusting in his defence, we may ‘ not so much as fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ.’ Here the power and providence of God are very naturally called up, to give us assurance that he can help us ; and to quicken our faith that he will help us ; whereby hope of God’s protection, one of the most lively and useful of divine graces, is strongly impressed upon the mind. The first evening collect for inward peace is grounded upon the same principles ; it teaches us to look upon God as that divine fountain from whom, and by whom, and by whose grace all holy desires are begotten in the mind, all good counsels and resolutions grow there, and at last bring forth just works, the source of inward peace. It therefore encourages us to call upon him for such firm persuasions of our reconciliation with him, and such comfortable testimonies of our obedience to his will, that we may ever enjoy that peace which the world cannot give ; so being inwardly pure, our hearts eagerly set to obey God’s commandments, and being defended from the terrifying fear of our enemies, we may pass our time in rest from our foes, and quietness in our own minds through Christ Jesus. This you see is the spirit with which we must sue for inward peace, and this is evidently the most likely means of producing it in us. The third collect for morning and evening

prayer was, I said, a petition for grace. We well know by sad experience, that without the grace of God we can do nothing, and that therefore our help cometh of the Lord. What therefore can be more serviceable, to confirm upon our minds an affecting notion of our weakness and readiness to fall, than such an address as in the first of these collects we are taught to make to our heavenly Father, the almighty and everlasting God, for his defence of us by his mighty power, from sin and bodily danger, and that he will take all our concerns and doings of a spiritual and temporal kind into his own governance, so that we may do always that is righteous in his sight? Or how can we better accustom ourselves to a reliance on God's grace, than by daily praying that God would 'lighten' our inward as well as our outward darkness, and defend us in our souls, bodies, friends, and estate, from 'all perils and dangers' for the 'love of his only Son,' Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. If the business of *petition* be to impress upon us a lively confidence in God's perfections, as being alone able to relieve our wants and protect us from dangers, it cannot be better effected than by such short, earnest, pertinent, faithful applications of the soul to the divine excellences, as you have now heard. Nor do we want the warrant of comfortable experience, that by a diligent use of this service, the spirit of prayer hath been indeed excited.

Having now provided *ourselves* with the extensive blessings of grace and peace, we are at liberty to intercede and offer up our prayers for *others*. Now, let

it be remembered that a conviction of God's alone ability, and of his willingness to give us the spiritual and temporal blessings we feel the want of, is the foundation of our making request to the almighty parent of all good. Nay, but he who is a Christian feels the wants of other people ; he knows that they want the blessings of grace and providence equally with himself ; his bowels of mercy yearn towards them ; the image and likeness of God's communicative goodness being formed within him, he is therefore influenced with an earnest desire of their happiness, and does the best he can to promote it, by instantly recommending them in all things to God's protection. The business of intercession then is to implore all temporal and spiritual blessings for others ; but these are ordinarily sent down upon men through the ministration of persons appointed of God for these purposes. It is through the hand of temporal governors that temporal things, and of spiritual governors, that spiritual things, are usually derived upon men. When therefore we do entreat God's wisdom and goodness, by his unerring counsel to guide and govern the hearts and affections of these, we make the best general application we can possibly do, for the supply of what other people stand in need of. Now, the law of charity, which does universally open our hearts unto all men, does more especially interest us by many considerations, human and divine, in the happiness of those who are of one church and nation with us. These reflections will serve to shew us, not only with what propriety the collects for the King,

Royal Family, and Clergy, have the first place in our intercessions, but also with what latitude they are to be understood, and consequently what spirit of love to others they proceed upon. When therefore you offer up your prayers for the King, as you are now taught to do, you will not forget that from your more affectionate love towards him, you are making supplication for the whole people of the land, beseeching God to bless them with all temporal good, and that you make such request known by praying especially for the King, through whom almighty God sends these blessings upon us. Hear the substance of the prayer itself. 'O heavenly Father, high and mighty,' who sitting upon 'thy throne, beholdest' with a providential eye, 'all the dwellers upon earth,' look with compassion, and behold the people of this land, and for their sakes bless the King with the 'grace of thy Holy Spirit,' that in governing us 'he may walk in thy way,' which can alone direct him to make us prosper; give him gifts 'from above,' that he may be fitted for the administration of so great a charge; visit him with 'health, and wealth, and victory,' and grant that in all things he may so acquit himself of his high duty, that he may at last be eternally happy through Christ Jesus. In the following prayer, looking forward to the necessity there is that the temporal blessings derived upon us through the King, should be continued to us by a like channel, we humbly recommend the Royal Family to God for the same blessings, and the same gifts. Thus we have done our utmost, and given abundant testimony of our

love and fellow-feeling of wants, to those who are kindred with us, in interceding with God for all temporal happiness upon them; still their spiritual and much greater wants demand our most earnest prayers.

We cannot but be highly affected with the misery of sin, and the excellence of God's goodness in establishing a means of deliverance from it; we cannot but earnestly wish that all men were made effectual partakers of that victory, which overcometh the world through the grace and power of Christ Jesus; and therefore for the sake of such inestimable spiritual blessings, we proceed to invoke that Almighty power, by whom only so great and difficult a work as the conversion of souls can be completed. We humbly beseech him, that since he hath in so marvellous a manner declared and defended his glorious gospel of liberty, he will by the same mighty superintendence, even now make the same effectual, by pouring down upon the ministers thereof, through whom the people are to receive the spiritual food, the saving spirit of grace to fit and dispose them for their important office. [We also pray for] his blessing, that their labours may be successful in bringing the several congregations committed to their charge, to a zealous walking in all piety and godliness, so that the honour of our advocate and mediator Jesus Christ may shew forth itself in the lives of all professing themselves his disciples among us. So having before recommended our brethren to God, by praying for all temporal blessings upon them in the person of the King, we

are here helped to plead with him in their behalf, for spiritual blessings in the persons of the ministers of his word.

We are now discharged from our confined applications to God for others, and love is now at liberty to give itself full scope to commiserate the various miseries of our fellow creatures, and to recommend them all in one unlimited intercession to the divine mercy. There is something incomparably noble in the charity we are here called upon to exercise: to look round upon the wretchedness of the whole human race, and to feel so unbounded a distress, carries a majesty and dignity of heart with it, which I shall by no means take on me to describe. How greatly does it express itself in a most affecting appeal to God; how strongly, yet how humbly doth it plead for the wants of miserable man! It hath taken now upon it to speak unto the Lord: O let not the Lord be angry! Lord, thy goodness hath made, and thou dost preserve all these thy miserable creatures; wilt thou not also bless them with all spiritual blessings; shall not the Lord stretch out his healing wing over all nations, and make his gracious ways known unto them, which we find so unspeakably comfortable? Here, if ever, the genuine spirit of intercession is expressed in all the humility of reverential fear, all the importunity of brotherly love, all the confidence of lively faith. And let us take care that our hearts be formed to such an universal feeling of human infirmities, as this devout prayer proceeds upon. Let us see how the world stands in need of God, and let this

engage us to offer up our petitions for all conditions of men, without and within the church, however afflicted and distressed, that God of his compassionate goodness will graciously deliver them.

Thus *petition*, as arising from a sense of our wants, and grounded on God's power and willingness to relieve us, hath been exemplified in this part of the church service, which I am confident hath appeared not only fit to express such our wants, but also to raise them upon our minds, and to [lead us to] rest ourselves upon God for a discharge from them; and this not only in our own particular cases, but also in those of others, who either labour under one common bond of necessity with us, or want those rich blessings we enjoy.

I now go on to the last part of prayer, and also of our daily service, viz. *thanksgiving*, which was said to be the expression of a grateful heart, upon reflection on the great blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which it had experienced at God's hand; the use of which, besides the returning to God the thanks so justly due to him, and the increasing our love and reverence, was observed to confirm upon our hearts a faith and hope, and confident resignation with regard to God's future dealings with us. Look back now on the supply which God has given you of your various wants; consider yourselves as brought into the world helpless infants, more helpless than the meanest creature, and look what you now are in the ornaments of body and mind. Remember that through an uninterrupted course of watchful providence, you are

become what you are ; but reflect more attentively on your hopeless state as an eternal being. You were [each of you] a miserable, sinful, lost creature, of whom it might be said, it were ten thousand times better you had never been ; but now an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, a present possessor of great and precious spiritual blessings which you could have no prospect of. Tell it then to every faculty of your soul—this hath God done, all this is his gracious work ; proclaim it aloud within you, till every desire and affection of your heart be on fire, to return to God with the warmest thankfulness. Then you shall find what a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful ; then shall you enter into the spirit of that excellent form of thanksgiving, which the church service calls on you daily to make before God. This form of thanksgiving suggests the highest arguments to thankfulness, whilst it helps us also to express our grateful sentiments with an honest sincerity. Here we are put in mind to look upon ‘ Almighty God’ as the ‘ Father of all mercies,’ and to increase our obligation to consider ourselves as ‘ his unworthy servants,’ altogether unworthy of any favours at his hand, and therefore more forcibly obliged to offer to God the ‘ humble and hearty thanks,’ which are due unto him. Here we are instructed to ‘ bless’ him for the temporal mercies he hath shewed us—‘ creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life,’ but ‘ above all’ other mercies, ‘ for the redemption of the world’ from utter vengeance by ‘ our Lord Jesus Christ,’ for his word and sacraments and other ‘ means’ of conveying ‘ grace’ at present, and

for the 'hope of glory' and immortality at the last. Here, in short, we are informed that the highest return of gratitude is a debt upon us for such amazing blessings, even an 'unfeigned' thankfulness in heart, a joyful expression of it with 'our lips,' and a 'giving up ourselves' entirely to God's 'service,' so as to 'walk before him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.'

Judge now, whether any thing could be so well contrived to stir up a sense of gratitude, as this general thanksgiving, every word of which presents to us a new, and still more incomparable instance of divine goodness ! But doubtless many among you have experienced the fitness of this prayer of thanksgiving, to express the overflowing of their hearts towards the Father of mercies, beyond what I can describe. To such as are insensible to the blessings God hath bestowed upon them, nor are warmed with sentiments of gratitude, I can recommend nothing so properly as the constant and attentive use of this form, in order to awaken in them a becoming return to the divine love. After all, let us set ourselves to bless God for his abundant kindness towards us, and let us endeavour that our hearts may prompt the lively expressions which our lips utter, so shall we find thanksgiving to be not only a most useful, but also a most comfortable exercise—inspiring us with a lively faith in God's promises, an assured hope of his favour, and a resigned submission to his will, who hath already directed all things so graciously for us.

We have now seen the several parts of prayer pre-

sented to us in a very natural order, and with such a propriety of sentiment and expression, as cannot but engage us highly to esteem the church service, and most carefully to make use of it. The sum of the whole is in the last words of the concluding prayer of St. Chrysostom. We must so enlarge the notions we have of God, and so represent them before him, that God may mercifully accept the 'desires' and longings of our souls after him, and 'fulfil our petitions' for the things we stand in need of, so that the knowledge of God and his truth may be growing upon us, and we may thereby become daily more fit for, and draw yet nearer and nearer to the life everlasting.

If this whole service hath been gone through with becoming attention and devotion, if we have been in earnest in what we have been about, and really laid ourselves open before God in all integrity of heart, nothing can be more comfortable than the blessing which God graciously gives to quiet, cheer, and support us. This being, as it were, God's answer of acceptance to our faithful prayers, must be received with all reverence, the people in the primitive church being directed to bow their heads when it was pronounced unto them. Let us then receive this prayer of benediction with all joy and thankfulness, and let us add our hearty Amen, thereby to make it our own, so that 'the grace' purchased for us by the death 'of our Lord Jesus Christ' may procure our pardon, the love of the Father may put his seal of acceptance to that sacrifice, and 'the fellowship,' and communication of the graces 'of the Holy Ghost,' may perfect

our sanctification ; and that all these may ‘ be with us now,’ and continue with us ‘ all evermore.’ To which ever blessed Trinity, even the Father, Son, and Spirit, be ascribed all honour and obedience, ‘ world without end, Amen.’ ”

The effect of this exposition of the daily church service, delivered with all the power and energy peculiar to its author, and subsequently lent for private reading to the associate Christians of Truro, must have been incalculably beneficial in promoting that union of heart and feeling in worship, on which our reformers set so just a value, and so well knew how to excite and cherish. Ministers too seldom devote their thoughts to the elucidation of the ritual in which they are engaged ; and the people, untaught to appreciate the forms of their prayer-book, do not understand, and therefore cannot fully enter into the nature of its admirable adaptation to the various uses for which it was compiled. Perhaps a more spiritual flock than Mr. Walker’s never existed, and the cause of this may be in a great measure traced to their enlightened acquaintance with a series of spiritual services, so well calculated to keep alive a frame of true piety. Wherever those who adhere to the forms of our church, are wisely instructed by devout teachers in their nature and design, an effect may be expected similar to that produced at Truro : a high tone of spiritual feeling will rest upon ministers and people, while a neglect of this necessary instruction will generate the flat and

unprofitable condition of congregations, so often justly complained of. The indiscreet manner in which some clergymen of eminent zeal, unquestionable piety, and certainly of extensive, but not of unmixed usefulness, overlooked the value of the forms, and despised the discipline of our establishment, during the days of the revival of religion in this country, produced evils only to be remedied by the line pursued at the present time, by men not less devout in heart but more judicious in practice. If any thing can restore the primitive affection for our establishment, it will be the consistent and enlightened churchmanship of those who now form its brightest ornaments, but who desire not to move out of their assigned orbit, though they are anxious to shed their light as far beyond it as possible.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LITANY—BAPTISM—THE LORD'S SUPPER— MATRIMONY.

BISHOP BRAMHALL well observes in his answer to Milton, that they who do not use forms in public prayers, direct them more to their hearers than to God; while others that read a liturgy, have their affection more at liberty, not being yoked to the search of words. We have already seen in Mr. Walker's excellent treatise on the Morning and Evening Prayers, how admirably our Reformers provided for this important part of congregational worship; but he was not less successful in directing his followers to understand and appreciate the most affecting service in the world—

THE LITANY.

“ A Litany is said [in the rubric] to be a *general supplication*—i. e. of all the people under the pressing

sense of some evil. The litany now under consideration is chiefly taken from an old office of this kind, which was drawn up at a time when sickness, war, and universal calamity overran the church; and it is evident at first view, that this service is altogether expressive of the earnestness and importunity with which a nation, under the visitation of God's hand, would with one voice call upon him to compassionate their miseries, and turn away his wrathful displeasure from them. The impatience for deliverance naturally expresses itself in broken sentences, at every turn interrupted by the loud cries of the distressed. Were you one of a miserable multitude, ready to sink down into the depth of the sea, what, think you, would be your general address to God, but 'Save Lord, we perish!' Would you not contend with each other in calling upon God, and in the very expressions of this litany, beseech God to hear you, to deliver you, and spare you from the dreadful ruin? But now, if every Christian be in more imminent danger than one in a sinking vessel, or in the midst of flames, or shut up in a city where the plague, pestilence, or famine raged, and death spreading resistless dismay, was ready to lay hold of him—if the Christian's danger be not only more imminent, but his deliverance of incomparably higher importance to his happiness, there may be seasons when the litany before us may be exceedingly proper. And doubtless there are seasons when, although public calamity ceaseth, and all things are calm and at quiet without, yet within is an insupportable weight of misery, humble dread

of God's vengeance, and despair of escaping it. The soul [being thus] compassed with the sorrows of death, and the pains of hell having already laid hold upon it, with what vehemence will it call upon the name and power of the Lord, in the words of the psalmist and of this supplication, 'O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul, thou gracious, righteous, and merciful God!'

Again, there are seasons of security yet more to be feared, when the soul feels nothing of its danger, and the heart is so obstinately hard as to go down without any sensibility, and as it were willingly and triumphantly to its utter destruction; a state of all others the most dreadful, and which we cannot too earnestly nor too devoutly beseech God to preserve us from, and to deliver others out of. Should the grace of God, as it sometimes does, at one glance open the eyes of such a miserable man, when he had now begun his last step; should the first notice of eternity be given him, when he was now already falling into everlasting damnation, how loudly, how passionately would he cry 'good Lord, deliver me!'

There are seasons also wherein, through the especial goodness of God, with a full assurance of faith, we lay hold of eternal life, and in a manner take possession of immortality; so lively are our hopes, so sanguine our expectations, [that we feel] as if all opposition from the enemies of our salvation were in vain, and we were now past all danger of falling or coming short of the prize, we seem even now to have

laid our hand upon. But anon,¹ all this exultation of heart may be utterly excluded ; we may find ourselves shamefully giving way to the meanest temptation—what then can we do but call upon God, that he will arise, help, and deliver us for his mercies' sake.

There is therefore a variety of seasons besides those of public calamity, when we may have reason in our various circumstances, to come more particularly to God with this supplication ; and were we well aware of the importance of our warfare, of the subtilty and power of temptation, and that we have a party within us always ready to receive and support it ; did we know the vengeance we do indeed already deserve, and should God enter into judgment with us, we should be quickly convinced that not a day or hour passes over us, in which we may not well call upon God to pardon and defend us. Suffer me then to lay this matter a little more largely before you, inasmuch as an affecting sense of your danger, and utter want of divine protection, is what must give you the true spirit of this general supplication, and enable you to bear a becoming and profitable part in it. The end of our being is to honour and serve God, and our business in this life, is to become qualified for such service, i. e. to acquire such a temper and disposition of mind here, as will fit us to find our eternal happiness in honouring and serving God hereafter. This temper and disposition is in one word *love*, or such a

¹ A good old fashioned word, which it is a pity should have been superseded by the unmeaning expression *bye and bye*.

bearing of the whole soul towards God, such a constant conviction of the understanding, such a bias in the will, such a vehemence in the affections, as will make us like and admire God, long after him, and find incomparable delight in serving, pleasing, and enjoying him. Without this temper, we are unfit for God and unhappy. Now such is our natural corrupt estate, that we have nothing like this disposition of mind within us, no knowledge of God, no desire after him, nor pleasure in him. On the contrary, we are entirely engaged in the things which the world presents to us; we eagerly desire, and are very busy and warm to obtain them. All within us is blind and obstinate self-will, self-love, pride, vanity, envy, and lust; all without, a horrid scene of wickedness; and when we do but make one step towards enlarging ourselves, under the power of Christ and the guidance of his Spirit, from this tyranny of sin, instantly all is alarm about us, and the world, the flesh, and the devil are in arms to contest with us the matter of our deliverance. Nor when the deformity of outward vices hath been discovered, and we renounce and abhor them, will it be a less difficult task to reform the soul, and to bring every affection and desire to a total submission to the law of love. We may stop whilst our work remains unfinished: nay when we are upon the point of attaining, and have tasted and drank deep of the heavenly gift, being made partakers of the Holy Ghost, we may after all fall away, and suffer the deserved wrath of God in eternal misery. From this very important representation of

the work we have to perform, together with the difficulties both from within and without we have to contend with, and the infinite importance it is to us we should be successful, it may be easy to discover how great reason we have to engage the divine assistance, to guard us from so many evils that threaten us, and how earnestly we must needs call upon God to interpose his almighty power with great might to succour us. The amount of the whole is, that when we are oppressed with the load of temporal or spiritual misery, when we dread the punishment of our sins, or shrink at the difficulties and dangers which beset us in our Christian course, we cannot but flee unto God for deliverance. Now, under any such sense of misery, or dread of danger, the litany helps us to a most passionate and affecting address to Almighty God. It begins with an invocation above any thing proper, not only to set our vileness before us, but to kindle our hopes and quicken our faith, whilst at the same time it enables us to plead with God, in such terms as are incontestably most apt to engage him to hear us. ‘ O Father of heaven, we are thy creatures, thou hast made and dost preserve us ; have mercy upon us in this our misery. O God the Son, who hast redeemed us and purchased us by thy own blood, have mercy upon us labouring under the miserable effects of our sins. O God the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, thou sanctifier, have mercy upon us miserably holden under the power of sin. O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons, Father, Redeemer, Sanctifier, each apart and

altogether one God, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.'

Having now called upon God in a manner incomparably fit to induce him to have compassion on us, we begin to open in many particulars the misery we labour under. Seeing we fear God's anger for the sins of our forefathers and ourselves, we beseech our kind Redeemer that he will turn away from us the punishments we have deserved, that he will not give us over to follow our own heart's lust, but that he will deliver us from all evil—from sin and temptation thereto, the craft and assaults of the devil, and from their fatal consequences, the wrath of our Judge and everlasting damnation. But especially [we pray to be delivered] from all inward sins of the heart, viz. spiritual blindness, pride, vain glory, hypocrisy, envy, hatred, malice, all uncharitableness, and from all outward sins in the life, such as fornication, and all other damning deadly sins, and all the deceit and wickedness of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Thou who hast subdued all these, Christ Jesus, deliver us from them! Deliver us also from God's judgment, most justly due to us; from temporal visitations—such as 'lightning or tempest, plague, pestilence or famine, or battle, or murder, or unprepared and sudden death'; also from 'sedition,' or any such-like grievous calamity. Above all [deliver us] from 'hardness of heart,' as insensibility to our sins or our punishment, and such a wicked life as may lead to a 'contempt of thy word and commandments.' From all these various and most terrifying

evils, dearest Jesus, we importune thee to deliver us. By all thou hast done and suffered for our salvation, deliver us ; by ' thy incarnation, life, and precious death, by thy resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.' According to thy truth and mercy, deliver us from the hand of God's wrath ' in all time of tribulation ;' deliver us from ourselves ' in all time of wealth and prosperity.' ' In the hour of death and in the most awful day of judgment, good Lord, deliver us.'

I shall not stay to recommend the vehement earnestness of this appeal to the great circumstances of the history of Christ, nor to mention with how much consolation the afflicted soul must recount the various triumphant sufferings of our Lord, and ground upon them a lively confidence of its own deliverance. Let it suffice to observe, that the dread of evil cannot be expressed or prayed against, in a more affecting manner than we have now heard it.

Thus we have done all we can to remove our fears and our dangers, by putting ourselves under the best protection, even that of Christ Jesus, who is able to save us to the uttermost. We may now therefore recommend others to the same powerful protection ; and this we are taught to do in the following intercessions, beseeching Christ to hear us for the universal church, and especially for the church among us ; and herein for the King, that he may be holy, pious, and prosperous, and for the Royal Family ; the Clergy, that they may be devout and exemplary ; the nobility, that they may be religious and prudent ; the magis-

trates, that they may be just and upright ; the whole people, that they may be happy and safe. Nor are we suffered to stop here, but our prayers are offered up for all sorts of men ; for their unity and peace, for a universal spirit of love, fear and obedience towards God, increase of grace, humble hearing of the word, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit in us all, even in all mankind. [We pray also] for the conversion of those that be in error, the confirming the strong, and aiding and comforting the weak ; for all people in any kind or degree of misery : for all conditions of men in general, and especially for our enemies, and for all the sons of men, that God would bless us all with every thing needful for the body, and that he would supply the wants of all our souls by giving us repentance, remission, and reformation.

Having now laid before God the great scene of human wants, and pleaded with him for ourselves and for others, we cannot upon the whole, from a view of so general a need of divine protection, but redouble our entreaties. ‘ Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us ! ’ ‘ Lamb of God, who by the sacrifice of thyself takest away the sins of the whole world, grant us thy peace,’ even the peace which thou hast purchased with thy own blood—have mercy upon us and all mankind in this our misery. ‘ O Christ, hear us,’ thou anointed of the Father, hear our supplications. O Father of mercies, ‘ O Son of God, O Holy Spirit, pity and forgive us.’

Remember now that you can no way come unto God but by Christ, nor express your petitions so

effectually as in his words ; present therefore all these your supplications to God, in the prayer your Lord hath taught you. Beseech your heavenly Father that you may henceforth hallow his name, that his kingdom may come upon you, his will may be done in all his dispensations, that he will give you the daily blessings of this life, but especially that he will forgive your trespasses, nor lead you into temptation of falling into sin, but deliver you from the evil and punishment of it.

We have now but one thing more to do before we conclude this excellent exercise of devotion, which is, that seeing we have besought the removal of present evils, we may endeavour to obtain favour with God for the preventing future. Here then we begin humbly to beseech God, that he will not henceforward 'deal with us after our sins, neither reward us after our iniquities.' This we more largely entreat in the following prayer, wherein looking up to God, our merciful Father, with sighing, contrite, or sorrowful hearts, we pray not only that our supplications may be heard, in all troubles of mind and adversities of body, but also that all evils, which men or devils contrive against us, may 'be brought to nought,' so that we, unhurt by any kind of persecution or distress, may evermore come before God's presence, with thanks and praise for our safety and protection. If your sense of danger and misery hath been any thing lively in the foregoing litany, you will not fail to back this request by your own hearty application to God in the words which follow, and call upon him

to help and deliver you for his name's sake. Nor will you cease your importunity, till you have again and again called upon him with a vehemence of desire, only to be expressed in the short sentences which follow. 'Lord, thou hast done great things of old, deliver us for thine honour.' Glory be to thee, Father, Son, and Spirit ! 'Defend us, O Christ, from our spiritual and temporal enemies, and we shall be safe ; we are in great distress, look graciously upon us ; behold with pity our sorrows, and we shall be comforted ; mercifully forgive our sins, and we shall be at peace.' At length this eagerness of supplication being, as it were, run down and tired, the mind is instructed to give itself up to God, and to repose upon him in a most gentle, humble, and resigned prayer, that God will pity our weakness and 'look mercifully upon our infirmities ;' that he will 'turn from us all those evils which we have indeed most righteously deserved ;' that he will give us grace in all our troubles, to 'put our whole trust in his mercy,' so that we may evermore serve him in holiness and purity of life, to his honour and glory, and our peace and comfort, through Christ Jesus.

We have now seen the most lively method, whereby to remove or prevent any misery which may fall upon or threaten us, and also a most lovely exercise of the highest Christian virtues, faith, hope, resignation, patience, and charity. Let this induce us all not to pass over so admirable a service, with a cold insensibility and an unaffecting indifference, but to join in it with fear and trembling, yet with assurance and faith,

that our addresses to God may be as warm and lively as our necessities are urgent, and that we may find rest, when it can only be had in making our requests known unto God. May he so enlarge our hearts in the use of this most excellent duty of prayer, that by a constant communion with God, we may be transformed into his likeness, and prove by our own experience what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. Now to that eternal almighty God, even the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be given all praise and glory, and thanksgiving for ever, Amen."

BAPTISM.

While this indefatigable pastor most anxiously endeavoured to instil into his people, such a sense of the nature of our public services, as might tend to produce in them an earnest desire to join, when assembled before God, in a united outpouring of kindred aspirations after his promises, and sympathetic breathings for true holiness of heart and life, he did not forget to convey to them instruction on the design and administration of the church's ordinances. In his lectures on the catechism, he enters fully upon the subject of *baptism* as the first sealing ordinance; nor is there to be found in the works of any other writer, a more profitable treatise on that sacrament. It is not however within the province of this volume, to enter on the abstract question of baptism, but to shew how Mr. Walker enjoined its celebration, with a view

to the spiritual advantage of parents, sponsors, and children—in fact to describe, as was proposed in the outset, his mode of working the machinery of our church, with a view to illustrate its power and value.

He instructed his followers, that the sum and substance of their duty under the baptismal vow, was “solemnly to deny sin in the life, and reject it with the heart ;” the evident obligation of those, who had publicly expressed their engagements of *renunciation, faith, and obedience.*

With regard to the choice of sponsors, Mr. Walker advised parents to be guided solely by this rule, “*who will be most helpful to me in the Christian education of my child ?*” He thus guarded against the carelessness of selection, that has caused this interesting custom to degenerate into a mere form, by which one of the loveliest bonds of Christian society has been loosened and rendered almost useless. “The only thing in view,” he further urged, “is the procuring such godfathers and godmothers, as in all respects are judged fittest for helping to bring up the child like a Christian, without regard had in any means to interest, convenience, or grandeur. This is plainly the duty of the parent upon this occasion ; and were this but duly done, the disgrace which this prudent institution lies under, would soon be removed, and it would quickly vindicate itself from such objections as have too justly arisen from the abuse of it.”

He likewise reprobated the unbecoming practice of making the day on which this ordinance is adminis-

tered an occasion of festivity. "It were altogether needful," he said, "that all due moderation and decency be used, in the entertainment of friends upon such solemn seasons ; and a very solemn thing it is truly. For tell me, I pray you, do not you dedicate, present, and offer up the fruit of your body to God, to be made partaker of God's mercy through Christ ? Do you not call upon God to receive him into the ark of Christ's church, to wash him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost, that he may be delivered from God's wrath ; and do you not earnestly plead with God, that he may be stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity ; that he may so pass through this world as to come to everlasting life ? Are not these matters of more serious concern to you, than how you may acquit yourselves in the entertainment of your friends, which, it is likely, too much engages your thoughts at these times." "Baptism you may be sure," he continued, "is no trifling matter, although as it is now contrived, it seems to be much dwindling into a matter of form." It is in truth the decay of the spirit of outward observances, which prevents their usefulness in these times, as well as in the days of Mr. Walker. It is the custom to charge unsuitableness to the age, upon offices the value of which we never put to the test, instead of clearly explaining their intention and looking to their operation on society. We suffer our weapons to rust, and then proclaim that their edge is not sufficient for our present warfare.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The communicants at Truro, appear to have been constant objects of their minister's deepest solicitude. In his exposition of the design of the Lord's supper, he cleared away those clouds of mystery, in which men's imaginations had involved it, and made its nature and use plainly intelligible to all orders of people. There is scarcely any part of parochial duty more trying, than the constant necessity to combat false notions, rebuke carelessness, and remove fears as to this delightful sacrament; the most excellent sign to exhibit, the simplest mean to convey, and the most appropriate seal to confirm covenant blessings. All instruction given to Mr. Walker's hearers, was in accordance with the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus. In order that they might know the obligations, resting on such as had received the emblems of a Saviour's dying love, he taught them:—

1. That every person communicating, doth make public profession of Christianity.

2. That he doth hereby give hearty assurance of the spirit of love abiding in him, and make promise of all the offices of it to his fellow-members.

“I am first,” said he, “to shew you that communicating is making profession of Jesus Christ. The word sacrament signifies an oath, which the Roman soldiers were used to take when they enlisted themselves under their generals, by which they owned themselves to be soldiers in the cause of their leaders,

and engaged to stick to them at all adventures of hazard or fatigue. Because of the likeness of the thing, in our public avowal of Christ for our leader and head, in the two instruments appointed by him for that purpose, these instruments have had the name of *sacraments* given to them. Consequently, in the use of these instruments, there is an actual profession of Christ, and engagement to cleave to him as his servant and soldier. A man taking the sacrament, the oath of a Christian soldier, doth in the most direct manner engage himself to be loyal to his Lord, and publishes to the world that he belongs to the service of the Lord Jesus. Now that sacraments are indeed such badges of profession—badges which he who takes not, doth not indeed profess himself a Christian, nor ought he to be so accounted of by others, and by which he who takes them lays himself under the most solemn, awful, and public obligations to act as a Christian—is evident from what St. Paul saith—‘*are not they which eat of the (Jewish) sacrifices partakers of the altar?*’ Do not they thereby profess themselves Jews, and own the obligations of the ceremonial worship? Who can doubt it? In like manner (for in proof of this the matter concerning Christian and Jewish profession is here introduced) should you see people eating in a heathen country of idol feasts, would you have any question that they were idolaters,—that they professed the belief and service of their false god? Should you indeed see one of them who drew back and forbore to eat, you would suspect and hope that he was

not of them ; but his joining and eating, would quickly convince you that he professed idolatry. There is therefore, you see, a profession of Christianity in partaking of this our feast ; and this it was needful to remark, not so much to prove the thing itself, as to intimate to the absent that they are not even professed Christians, do not profess themselves such, and also that the solemnity of the engagement there taken on us and professed, might more evidently and importantly appear to all those who approach unto it. A man communicating, doth profess Christ to be his Saviour and Lord, doth profess himself to be his servant and soldier, undertakes his service, and engages in his cause, and doth publicly declare this in the face of men, whether friends or enemies to his master, and before angels, whether of light or darkness. He doth declare and desire that, henceforward, he may be regarded as Christ's servant, as one ready to all the toils and all the works of a Christian. He doth, as it were, say aloud—‘hear ye this all the things in heaven and earth—I am a Christian, as one of your body, as one ready to join you in every work of godliness, and labour of love.’”

Having thus declared that coming to the sacrament is a profession of Christianity, Mr. Walker desired further to illustrate the nature of the Christian vow, “seeing so many,” as alas every minister does, “who had bound themselves by this very oath of loyalty and service, the communion, did either not understand it or not observe it.” He therefore conceived it to be necessary to compose elaborate discourses on the

nature of the profession which every attendant at the Lord's table is presumed to make. These *Sacramental Sermons*,¹ as respects clearness of statement, energy of language, and fidelity of appeal, have never been excelled by any writer on this solemn subject. While he fully described the Christian's acknowledgment of duty towards God in this ordinance, he also explained what we owe to one another as members of the family of heaven, not only as respects external acts, but the inward and holy spirit of love. Assembled at the banquet under Christ their head, believers are considered as united to each other, and bound to perform all the offices of relationship and amity. They are the household of the Saviour met at the Master's table, whose "banner over them is love." Its spirit therefore must be exhibited in their conversation, must qualify all their conduct, and give a lustre to the daily business of their lives. How Mr. Walker explained the temper and offices of this delightful characteristic of the real followers of the Redeemer, is seen in his *Five Sermons on Brotherly Love*, in which all the bearings of the subject are so luminously treated, that it seems to be exhausted, though in no part is there any weakening of its force and beauty. Such instruction in public, added to continual private conversation, could not fail to produce, under the divine blessing, extraordinary effects. The sublime ritual of the Church of England was felt, and its excellence proved by the characters of those who enjoyed

¹ These will be found in his *Miscellaneous Works* whenever they may be printed.

and appreciated it. The experiment of working it according to the spirit of the Reformers was tried, and succeeded. We have only to follow Mr. Walker's example of diligence, to study like him the connection and design of our services, to instruct the people in their meaning and scriptural consistency, and we shall find the results to be a salutary check to the schismatical, rash, and inconsiderate, alarm to the careless, encouragement to the faithful, with a growing spirit of unity in all classes of society, arising out of an enlightened regard to those silken ties of love, by which they are bound to Christ and to each other.

MATRIMONY.

The following excellent letters on marriage, will form a suitable conclusion to the account given in this chapter, of the manner in which Mr. Walker explained the duties enjoined in the rites of the Church of England, whose consistent members can never cease to look upon the ceremony of that union as *religious*, in the highest sense of the term.

TO MISS ———, ON HER INTENDED MARRIAGE WITH
MR. ———.

Truro, August 18th, 1756.

DEAR MISS ———,

I promised Mr. R. to write you a letter, nor can I ever do it on a more important occasion. That

state you are about to enter into, is not only of the utmost moment to your present happiness, but your eternal also seems to be in near connection with it. It is with the greatest pleasure and hope of your well doing, that I reflect on the gracious steps you and my dear William have been enabled to take towards this honourable estate. And it should be remembered by you with great thankfulness, that while others about you are hurrying into that holy estate, from views merely worldly or carnal, you should have been led on to choose one another, from principles of so much more excellent a nature. It is grace has endeared you one to the other, that heaven-born ornament which will grow more beautiful with age, and will render you a comfort the one to the other, superior to all the other blessings God may give, and will support you in every distress that may attend your married condition. I beg you, be sensible to whom you owe it, that at your age grace should be so precious to you. Look back and see what you were, that you may own the distinguishing goodness of your God in thus disposing your heart, and thereby delivering you from the greatest curse in this world, an ungodly husband, which had not God wrought graciously with you, it is but too probable would have been your lot. It is this will engage you to enter with confidence upon that state, which has so many duties and trials peculiar to it. The former of these (the duties of the married state) I doubt not you have maturely weighed, before this time, in the word of God, and in that office of matrimony where they are well put

together. I wish you to be perfectly advised of them, before you venture to make that solemn vow, you do at the time of matrimony, for the discharge of them ; and the example of the spouse's conduct to Christ, by which the apostle, under divine direction, illustrates your matrimonial duty, may give you a most clear and comprehensive notion of it ; and the substance of that duty as far as it shall regard your husband, may, I think, be shut up in this word, a willing subjection to him in the Lord. Beside this, you will have other duties in this new relation ; as to be a follower of godly matrons, to look to your house, and to take care of your children. You have informed yourself in all these points, and will be ready to make your solemn promise in the fear of the Lord, and with a good conscience. The more solemn you are in the transaction itself, and the more diligent to impress on your heart the obligation of your matrimonial engagement, renewing it also in your next approach to the Lord's table, the more influence it shall be likely to have upon you. And it may be of singular service that you make notes to be kept by you, of what your present views are of the matrimonial vows and duties. So awful a procedure now will probably have a good effect upon you ever after, besides which you shall find it of singular service, to keep your heart against those temptations, which the ease and other delights of a newly-married state bring with them, and by which I have usually seen the minds of the most serious a good deal hurt. Nor can I only wish you to take due care respecting the duties of a married

state, but that also you make now a reasonable estimate of the trials and troubles which must or may attend you in it ; such as the sickness or death of your husband before you ; the want or loss of children, together with the possibility of their turning out ill ; disappointments in worldly things, &c. &c. You know not how God may please to try you in this state ; but in this as well as every other, you must make account, you shall be tried ; of all which circumstances, you will likewise be put in mind, by the very words of your matrimonial vow. Such a casting up the cost, may possibly have a happy effect on your temper and conduct in all sorts of trials and troubles.

I wish you carefully to correspond with that great design of matrimony, the being a helpmate for your husband, which imports not only a helping with your husband in his labours, trials, and troubles, but also with his soul. This is a glorious aim in the married state, and shews the truest love, and has regard to the promoting his real and everlasting happiness. Let not this ever be lost sight of ; watch over him in love, warn him continually and without reserve, do not think him so established, as that he shall not need greatly your watchful eye : this will endear and keep you dear to him. There should be the greatest confidence between you, and in that view I particularly beg you will be faithful in keeping all his secrets.

I have thrown together such hints as occur. I pray God they may be in any way serviceable. You know how peculiarly I am interested for you and

William. That benediction which the priest shall say over you when you are married, is my earnest supplication and hope concerning you. “ God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you, and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting, Amen.

To this I can add nothing.

Your's affectionately and faithfully

in the Lord Jesus,

SAMUEL WALKER.

TO THEM BOTH.

Truro, September 22, 1756.

MY DEAR ——— AND ———,

I have not time to say much, but do you love one another? How do you know that? Your souls I mean. Is Christ the bond of your love? Is it his image you love in one another? or is your love too much carnal? Do you watch over one the other's heart with a loving jealousy? Are ye free, unreservedly so? What, every day, letting nothing pass? I would have you begin well. Open your hearts every evening; I beg you will. It will be a blessing to you a thousand ways. Methinks I should esteem such an opportunity the greatest blessing of a

married state. Well, but do you also pray for one another, aye, and do you pray with each other, yourselves alone? Have you done so often? do you delight to do so? Also are ye seeking God's glory in this state, and not your own pleasure? Are ye aware of the danger ye are in from *enjoyment* and *independency*? There is nothing more dangerous than the latter, because it is so agreeable to our *own* will, and especially dangerous upon a change, when from being dependent we become our own masters, and that most especially when we are first become so.

I could say much more, but this is enough for once, and I am just going to church. If I mistake not, there is no one more cordially yours than,

S. W.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. WALKER'S VIEWS OF THE DOCTRINES AND
PROGRESS OF METHODISM—CORRESPONDENCE
BETWEEN HIM, J. WESLEY, AND MR. ADAM
ON THESE SUBJECTS.

At the period when Mr. Walker was thus engaged in verifying the power of the system of his own church at Truro, he was marking with a keen and careful eye, the opinions and proceedings of those who were endeavouring to arouse a slumbering people in almost every part of the land. Such also was the high estimation in which his judgment and character were held, that his advice was courted and respected, even when not followed, by the most popular religious leaders of his day. The leaven of his solid excellence had spread by its own force, far beyond the small mass of people to which he had humbly applied it. And it will always be found by the man who is willing to move within the circle which Providence has

assigned him, that its circumference will be extended by the hand which guided and directed him, according to the divine wisdom, and far beyond human expectations. On the contrary, God lessens what man's ambition desires to enlarge. While Mr. Walker was regarding with deep attention, the progress of the revivalists throughout the country, they did not seem to forget, that their steps were being noted by no common observer. Amongst other attentions shewn him, he was invited to a consultation respecting the itinerancy of the devoted and useful, though eccentric Mr. Berridge, a name ever to be mentioned with veneration even by those who differ widely from him. The question was, whether he should continue or cease his irregular movements. Whitfield was present, and the advice he gave will be anticipated by all acquainted with his wonderful, and unquestionably effective career. Mr. Berridge, probably pressed closely by Mr. Walker as to his authority for the course he pursued, stated what he conceived to be the Scriptural grounds for it. He laid much stress upon Nathan's reply to David concerning his design to build the temple, "do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee," and declared it to have greatly moved him in the line of conduct he had adopted. "This," said Mr. Walker in his account of that remarkable interview, "appeared to poor Berridge a strong warrant to go on with his object, though the context shewed that it was the contrary in the case of King David." It seems that a considerable discussion arose upon the question, which Whitfield shortened

by enlarging upon his own proceedings, and the eminent success which shone upon the path of his itinerancy. This brought their deliberations to a conclusion, "in which" says Mr. Walker "nothing was concluded." If, however, nothing was concluded in theory, the continuation of Berridge's preaching expeditions, proves what he determined to practice; and that he did so with a single eye to the honour of his master, and the welfare of sinners, no man acquainted with his character and history, can presume to deny. The state of the clergy, and the irreligious aspect of the times were enough to rouse any sensitive mind; and that a man of the warm temperament and fervent zeal of the Vicar of Everton, should have acted as he did, can only raise our opinion of his goodness, whatever views we may take of his system, if such it could be called. Nor may any man dare to say that he and Whitfield, with others of a kindred spirit, were not called forth to their extraordinary work by an impulse from on high, to awaken the drowsy, though not to marshal the ranks of those who arose at their alarm.

But the attention of Mr. Walker was more particularly attracted to the effect of Mr. Wesley's doctrines, and the proceedings of himself and his preachers. The founder of Methodism was beginning to discover, that those he had set in motion required to be held in by a stronger arm, and a more powerful rein than he at first expected. His commanding presence awed his lay coadjutors into something like order and obedience; but as soon as

he departed from any place, the tidings that he received, were, that confusion had arisen amongst those he conceived he had left in a more hopeful condition. Things were assuming a serious appearance, both as regarded his present comfort, and the future prospects of his followers. It was an important time not only for the Wesleyans, but for the interests of religion in the entire nation. As may be imagined therefore, neither their opinions nor their acts remained unnoticed by Mr. Walker, whose correspondence on the subject will be read with interest, by all who are alive to the vast importance of the questions it embraces. He was by no means disposed to undervalue the instrumentality of the Methodists, nor to depreciate their excellences ; but he at the same time perceived the unsoundness of many of their leader's tenets and the dangers arising from his disposition to yield, upon grounds of expediency rather than of principle, to the desire expressed by his lay preachers to separate from the Church. The state of Truro proved beyond dispute the efficacy of the system prescribed by the rubric when duly administered, while it was clearly foreseen by its sagacious minister, that evils affecting the whole community, must arise from the bursting forth of a flame of zeal whose fuel was a mixture of enthusiasm, vanity, and passion, and which refused to be circumscribed by scriptural restrictions, enabling it to enlighten, but preventing it from spreading desolation. Under a wise impression as to the dangers which must accrue from the demonstration made by many of the adherents of

John Wesley, Mr. Walker warned him with a perspicuity of thought, and a true Christian fidelity, that will insure his conduct, in an affair so delicate and trying, the perpetual admiration of all friends of order. It is not unlikely also, that their correspondence at a crisis so momentous, will be profitable to those of the Wesleyans who still retain a respect and affection for the establishment, which they have not scrupled honourably to declare in the hour of trial. Although, like Mr. Walker, a great portion of our clergy cannot acquiesce in their views, yet like him, they will readily acknowledge the benefits conferred upon thousands by their fervour and diligence. He observed in a letter to Mr. Adam, “There is no doubt I owe somewhat to their zeal, though my case hath been different from the most of those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth these late years. *Their light hath either reproved or directed us all.* Like you, I have, and do, and will converse with them freely as they come in my way, though, as yourself, I suffer reproof for so doing.” This passage truly bespeaks the charity and friendly disposition of the minister of Christ. The spirit also which it manifests, will give additional weight to his calm and sound remarks on the doctrinal sentiments and operative plans of the Methodists of his day. “Amongst other things,” he observes, “engaging me to their conversation, this hath been one, that I might see in practice the various influence of their way of stating things, and my own, and hear the whole they had to say for their proceedings and sentiments. I hope they, I am sure

I have no cause to repent our conversings together. Yet we are not come nearer in sentiment. Reserving my fuller opinion to another occasion, I will say for the present, that I cannot agree with Mr. Wesley's definition of faith, and way of coming at assurance which follows from it. If faith be a certain *sure confidence* of God's love to *me*, then previous to any sanctifying evidence, there is assurance of my acceptance ; and that inward immediate assurance is the witness of the Spirit. For my part, I take this definition of faith to be unscriptural, and the conclusion which cannot but follow from it, concerning acceptance, unsafe. It hath had this effect with the most of the Methodists I have conversed with, that they have thought believing to be feeling, and faith by them hath been placed in the affections instead of the heart ; the consequence of which hath been doubting, when the stir of the affections hath been less. With regard to others, this account of faith hath produced hard judgments ; for, if a sure confidence of God's love to me be the essence of faith, then whoever want it are unbelievers ; whereas, if faith be the sinner's trusting his soul with Christ, from a persuasion, first of his own misery, and next of Christ's sufficiency, then this trust will be rather manifested as the first grace of the new heart, when the other graces which always accompany it, become so ; and whether a man have sure confidence or not, is surely a living principle (and therefore saving) if it dispose the heart to a determination for God as a lord and portion, and do influence to a true self-denial and

mortification of inward sin. There are many mistakes, in my way of reckoning, arising from this definition ; and though the authority of the old Puritans be pleaded for it, yet upon a closer examination, I do not find they meant as Mr. Wesley doth. Might not his notion of faith have arisen this way ? When he first went out unacquainted with experimental religion, he saw many falling into great fears under his preaching, and observed that by and bye, they were comforted in the news of the Gospel. What then is faith, says he, but the assurance of God's love to them which I hear these people speak of ? Whereas, as much as there was of faith in it, this confidence could only be the fruit of it. But to say no more of these dry disputations. In this day of darkness and licentiousness, it becomes all the friends of the Gospel to bear with one another ; and while they differ in opinion and denomination, to unite together in heart and endeavour, for the support of the common cause. It is my great comfort there are good men of all persuasions, who are content to leave each other the liberty of private judgment in lesser things, and are heartily disposed to unite their efforts for the maintaining and enlarging Christ's kingdom. This I take to be the most promising symptom of our day, and I am hoping great things from this spirit of moderation and peace."

Such were the objections of Mr. Walker to the Wesleyan notion of the nature of faith ; and it is difficult to say which is most to be admired, the clearness with which he expresses them, or the forbearance

and spirit of union he so affectionately inculcates. In another letter to Mr. Adam on the benefits conferred on his people by the Truro Society, he further observes :—

“ The benefit of this society is now appearing in a circumstance I had before little thought of. By the help of it, I trust we shall keep our people in the generality clear from the peculiarities of Methodism. That notion of a witnessing faith is now invading us, and one at least of the society is possessed by it, and very zealous to introduce it. It is not the least, among many bad consequences following upon that opinion, that they cannot think well of those who either are without it, or speak not of it in the way themselves do. This young man, together with one or two more who I suspect are looking towards it, is of a peculiar turn, remarkably warm in his constitution, not humbled in such a manner as to be patiently waiting for salvation, and therefore ready to catch at any thing which may minister present comfort. A feeling assurance is therefore exactly fitted for him, and he seems to have lost all apprehension of the power of godliness, but as consisting in sensible feelings. Upon recollection, I believe all those Methodists I have conversed with, who have been strenuous in this point, have been of like constitution and temper with him. I find talking signifies just nothing ; and the Scripture is made to speak unaccountably. This circumstance hath turned my thoughts upon Mr. Wesley's writings, and I have now before me ‘ Minutes of some late Conversations between Mr.

Wesley and others, printed at Dublin, in 1749.' The first was held at the Foundry, June 25, 1744, when Mr. Piers, with some other clergymen, were present. When I read this tract some years ago, I thought it a strange performance; but now on the review, I am surprised at the inconsistency and unscriptural assertions which run through the whole of it. Religion in the heart, according to their then notion of it, seemed to be nothing else but a continuation of rapturous impressions, and the whole of it founded upon their description of faith. 'Christ loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*;' or, at least, that witness of the Spirit which immediately follows, 'thou art pardoned, *thou* hast redemption in his blood.' It is not of the least strange things in these minutes, that, Prov. viii. 15; Eph. iv. 32; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Heb. viii. 10; 1 John iv. 10, 5, 19, are the Scriptures, and the only ones upon which this determination is founded. When the Methodists had been thus taught to seek justification, and to seek on such an impression the witness of the Spirit, why are not all other feelings equally his? Why not a hot feeling of a conceited heart to go and preach, a divine call? Why not a like impression, the spirit of supplication? And then, who shall resist the Holy Ghost? How can they conceive the least good hope of any that are not this way? In truth, I cannot see the least difference is made in their account of others, and that they regard alike the orderly and profane. It is impossible any thing less than confusion should be the consequence. But two

things are singularly remarkable in these minutes, which do sufficiently show the inexperience of those gentlemen at that time :—one, that they express not the least sense of the apostasy of man's will ; and the other, that by rejecting the imputation of Christ's righteousness, they ascribe the merit of our justification to faith, and not to him. In truth I thought a while ago, that this scheme did (however undesignedly) set up works in the place of Christ. For, if faith be a work as well as any other, and we are justified by it (which we must needs be if justification by Christ's obedience unto death be disallowed) then we are justified by works." Nothing can well surpass the convincing force of these statements. Scriptural in his doctrine, and full of affection in his feelings, Mr. Walker happily combined with the soundest opinions the truest sentiments of Christian love, and the utmost tenderness in all his actions, " holding it by no means fit to be the opposer of those who had been made so great instruments." " Nevertheless," he said, " I would gladly see them going upon a more scriptural and reasonable foundation, and purpose to write to Mr. Wesley soon upon the occasion of the trouble his people are bringing upon me, when I shall give him a few hints upon these matters, yet so as to avoid disputes, which would be no way profitable with a (between friends) weak and warm, though honest man, as I take him to be."

These remarks of Mr. Walker upon the doctrines of John Wesley, deserve the serious attention of his pious followers in the present times, and if duly

weighed, may operate as a valuable corrective to those delusive notions of *sensible* experience, which operate so injuriously on susceptible and ill-regulated minds. His views are the more worthy to be reflected on by the thinking portion of the Wesleyans, because though opposed to their ideas of faith and justification—two fundamental points—they present themselves to their notice under the attractive aspect of meekness and charity. They also must be admitted by all, even the unconvinced by his statement, to be powerfully argumentative, forming both in this respect, as well as in the characteristics before mentioned, a strong contrast to that bitter spirit of controversy, which afterwards clouded and blighted the fields on which the revivalists of the last century had sown the seeds of truth with such wonderful diligence. The same tone should pervade our discussions now. Whether men sleep or quarrel, the opportunities are equal for Satan to cast in his tares among the wheat. Personal hostility extinguishes Christian zeal, and occupies the place of Christian vigilance. Providence removes the light about which men are contending, lest it be overturned and extinguished in the unhallowed conflict.

Because we are unable to agree to some of the tenets of the Wesleyans, we need not exhibit towards them uncharitable acrimony; while, if our reasonings fail to convince them, they ought to receive our attempts to point out what we believe to be their errors, as proofs of Christian fidelity, and the best return we can make for any demonstration in favour of our own sanctuary. That God has made them

eminently useful at home and abroad, no man can deny ; but at the same time that their zeal is calculated to awaken, and their discipline to comfort, their teaching is defective in its power to edify those who have solidly progressed in spiritual growth. The teacher who resolves faith into feeling, and makes it a justifying cause, cannot reasonably wonder at defection, when those baseless emotions have subsided, and the little real good which was in them has passed off in the fury of enthusiastic effervescence. Of this character were the evils Mr. Walker predicted from the peculiar notions of the Methodists ; and the history of their proceedings, more particularly amongst the ignorant, have proved him to be a true though gentle prophet. His mind, however, was particularly harassed with the spirit of separation manifested by the first lay preachers among them, nor did their chief himself view it without great emotion. The question of departure from the Church having begun to be formally discussed, Mr. Wesley became alarmed, and though pressed violently on the subject, seemed disposed not to give way. He had recourse to the advice of Mr. Walker, who urged him to be firm. The preachers were desired “ to speak their minds at large,” upon the point, at the Leeds Conference, in year 1755. All that was advanced met with calm and serious attention ; and the result was a decision, “ that whether it was *lawful* or not, it was no ways *expedient*.” The history of this affair has been often narrated, but the important correspondence now about to be introduced into these pages, will give it a fresh-

ness and new interest, by exhibiting the workings of Mr. Wesley's mind upon a topic of such vast importance, and the firm adherence of men not less zealous or pious than himself, to the ritual and discipline of the Church of England. It will also, it is hoped, strengthen the attachment to the established usages of our national religion, of that portion of the Wesleyans, whose inclination leads them to support it, by shewing them what were the real feelings of the founder of their body before the reins, in which he held to the Church the ardent spirits which he had collected and set in motion, snapped in his hands. It appears from the following passage in a letter dated Sept. 18, 1755, which Mr. Walker wrote to Mr. Adam, that Mr. Wesley, during a visit to Cornwall at that time, had asked his opinion of a pamphlet he had written on the question of separation, which had been stirring itself among his followers, who warmly pressed the subject upon him. "I am willing," says Mr. Walker, "now to inform you, that Mr. John Wesley, when last week in these parts, communicated to me a pamphlet he had drawn up for the press, requesting my opinion upon it. The case is of the last importance to the interests of true religion, viz. whether the Methodists shall separate from us. I gave him my sentiments freely, as well as I could digest the matter in my thoughts in the short time allowed me for an answer. But I thought the thing of more moment than to be left to so poor a judgment as mine, and therefore requested him to seek farther light, and mentioned you as one likely to

help him to it. He sent me word that he would apply to you. I thought it not amiss to send you a copy of my letter to him, and shall be glad to see what your sentiments¹ are in answer to him. Since mine to Mr. Wesley, I hear he is warmly pressed upon by the lay-preachers, especially one Walsh, and that most of the preachers in the north are warm upon it. This information was given me by a Methodist, who as well I remember, had it from Mr. Wesley, and is otherwise perfectly acquainted with all their affairs."

The Walsh mentioned in this letter was an Irishman, originally a Roman Catholic. Many doubts upon the subject of Popery had been generated in his mind, by conversation with a brother who had renounced its errors. While in a state of suspense as to what views of Protestantism were the most scriptural, he was passing one evening through the streets of Limerick, when his attention was attracted by a crowd assembled round Robert Swindell, one of the first itinerants in Ireland, who was preaching on the parade. It was by that discourse that his subsequent steps were determined. He encountered immense obloquy and persecution, but persevered through it all: nor is it surprising, that having himself been awakened by an itinerant preacher, he should become an advocate of irregularity. To this he was also led by a natural enthusiasm of disposition, and by the

¹ The correspondence between J. Wesley and Mr. Adam, may be seen in Westoby's Memoir of the latter.

opposition he encountered from those in authority, and particularly from the rector of a parish near Cork, a magistrate, who actually imprisoned him, though he declared that no particular church was aimed at in his preaching, but only sin and wickedness in general. To do Walsh justice, it must be allowed that he was a holy, devoted man, and an admirable biblical scholar. Had his zeal been tempered with more discretion, and had he not yielded to a morbid melancholy, brought on perhaps by extreme application, he would have been one of the best of Mr. Wesley's coadjutors.

If Walsh had seen Ireland in the nineteenth century, and witnessed the efforts of the laborious, disinterested clergy whose numbers are perpetually augmenting in that country, he would not have urged his leader to separate from the Church. While the judicious churchman cannot but feel that separation from the establishment mournfully weakened and divided men, whose efforts union would have crowned with the happiest successes ; honesty compels him to acknowledge that the conduct of too many of his own body was rather calculated to repel than attract those who were blinded to the excellence of our system by the incompetency of the hands who worked it. Wesley, however, saw and felt the value of our national institutions ; and had he not given way to the ever mischievous motive of expediency, he would have left behind a higher, and a nobler, because a more consistent reputation, as well as more valuable results. These views Mr. Walker strongly enforced

upon him in the following most powerful and affectionate letter.

To the Rev. John Wesley.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

However I may justly think my opinion not worth your regarding, yet at your request, and upon an occasion than which nothing can, in my judgment, be of more importance to the interests of vital Christianity in these kingdoms, I would not believe myself at any rate justified, did I not represent what occurs to me upon your present very critical circumstances.

The main stress of the matter lies here, in this necessarily previous question, whether it be unlawful for the Methodists to abide in the Church. For if not, it is their duty to abide. And then, if it be not lawful for them to depart, it cannot in the very nature of the thing, be necessary or expedient they should. Nay, whatever necessity there should seem to be, it is certainly the will of God that they should not depart, while it is not lawful for them to do so. The necessity can be no real necessity, and the departing is taking the affairs of the head of the church out of his hand. While it is their duty to abide, it must be necessary, expedient, and for the good of the Church of Christ they should. Here, Sir, lies the great point, and that which should alone be canvassed. For if you set it on the foot of expediency, or as hereby it is stated, as a matter in-

different in its nature, (which certainly is not the case in the present question) so being removed from its proper basis the word of God, it becomes a matter of human judgment, and is left to be determined by men's opinions. However great your authority may be, yet you cannot expect that the body of Methodists will subscribe to your judgment ; indeed you will not : nothing but dispute can be looked for, while what seems inexpedient to one, will seem expedient to another. And if you will allow, and have me speak my real sentiments in a matter of so much importance, and wherein I have earnestly sued for light and direction since your pamphlet came to my hands, I verily think the publishing it can do no good, and will probably do much hurt ; whether by setting the Methodists a disputing on the one part, and about the fitness or unfitness of separation, or by giving occasion to the enemies of true Christianity to triumph, or its friends who are not Methodists to fear, when they shall find such a thing is in question among you ; as well as by reason of some things up and down which bear hard upon Mr. Whitfield and the dissenters, and which seem not of importance in the present question. Dear Sir, I am very heartily persuaded of your zeal for true religion, and your good-will to the Church of England, as far as is consistent with the former. Lay the matter before God, and search the scriptures whether it be lawful to separate, and what is indeed separation. The resolution which God gives you, is that, and that only which should be laid before

your friends and the world, if you will preserve peace among them, or, as it seems to me, do farther service to practical religion. When this is determined, it will be time enough to think if it would be expedient. Rest not till you be yourself fully determined upon that point, and in your search beware that you be not biassed by consequences, which have nothing to do with the lawfulness of things, being altogether conversant about the expediency of things lawful. I know you will search the scriptures, which no doubt are clear enough to determine any meek inquirer, whether it be lawful for him or not to abide in the communion of that church to which he belongs. I am going great lengths, and am condemning myself of impertinence ; yet considering you will not be offended, and desiring to offer what may in my judgment be of weight, I venture to say you must (1) Be determined in your own breast, whether it be lawful to separate or no ? (2) What is, and what is not, separation ? (3) Supposing you determine it is not lawful, whether you have taken any steps toward it already ? (4) If so, and separation be unlawful, whether you ought not prudently to put a stop to them ? (5) In this view, what you are to do with lay preachers ? This I know is a tender point ; but methinks it comes into the very heart of the question, for is it not likely that a handle has been given from hence to press a separation ? Perhaps some of the preachers may have been seeking it : doubtless there being such persons, raised a desire of their being ordained, in those of your people who

contend for a separation. Now, if the laws of the Church of England admit not such preachers, then herein is a step made in separation ; and, that whatever necessity there may be of them. Put this together ; and may you not have cause to think, that either you will not be able to stop a separation, or must some how or other stop these preachers. As long as they remain, there is a beginning of separation ; and that also which will keep the people in mind of it. I am only, you will please to observe, stating the case, not offering any advice, which I would by no means presume to do in so nice a matter. If you say, “ I dare not separate from the church,” what will you do with the lay-preachers ? If, “ I dare not lay aside the lay-preachers,” how will you prevent a separation in part begun already in them ? You must needs come to some resolution on this point, and I pray God to direct you to that which may be most for his glory. That middle way you have trod, of permitting, not appointing them, puts the matter quite out of your hands, and deprives you of all your influence. If you are persuaded that they are extraordinarily called, and that there is such a necessity as justifies a separation and departure from the laws of the church in this particular, why should you not appoint them to preach, and so keep them under your own direction ? If you are not satisfied whether the necessity of them or their call, might justify your appointing them to preach contrary to the law of the church, ought you not to tell them they are doing what you cannot judge lawful,

and therefore that you dare not encourage them in it? As long as they are either permitted or appointed, you seem to stand upon the brink of a separation. I take this matter of the lay-preachers to be the leading enquiry. Their permission or appointment, is in fact a partial separation from the Church of England, the essence of which considered as such, consists in her orders and laws, rather than in her doctrines and worship, which constitute her a Church of Christ. I have always thought this matter might have been better and more inoffensively ordered from the beginning, and doubt not but that a method might still be fallen upon, which conducted with prudence and patience, would reduce the constitution of Methodism to due order, and render it under God, more instrumental to the ends of practical religion.

Since writing the above I hear through ——— that this point of a separation is warmly contended for by some, and that you are pressed hard upon it. I beseech you, Sir, to be determined in your own mind, that as you do not think a separation lawful, so you will not yield to it on any hand, nor be driven into it by any apprehensions whatever. You may not do evil that good may come. Say the worst that can happen, that some of your leaders and many of your people leave you, yet I question not this would turn to God's glory in you, and give you opportunity of more abundant usefulness among the sinful people of England, than perhaps you have ever yet known. I am sure it will open you a way into

the heart of every honest man in it. Do the thing which is right, and fear no consequences. You can never fail of doing well while you do so. And remember, Sir, how needful it is something should be done in your lifetime. Is there not much cause to fear, that otherwise there will be little peace afterwards? Consider, Sir, upon what grounds do those of your friends who plead for a separation proceed? As far as I can collect from your pamphlet, they do not object (1) to the doctrines, nor (2) to the laws of the Church of England, as affording any considerable cause of separation; nor (3) to the liturgy, objecting to it because a form, or to any thing therein in suchwise as that they cannot join with it on the whole with a good conscience; they do not say (4) that they are violently thrust out of it, but (5) that the administration is bad; (would a man withdraw his subjection from the king upon a like ground, because the civil ministers did not act as they ought?) and (6) that they should be a more compact body if separate; and (7) insist that you have made a step towards separation already in the lay-preachers. Now, Sir, is there not much cause to believe they have not much considered the point, whether it be lawful to separate? Doth it not look rather as if it had escaped them?

I beg leave now to offer my thoughts concerning the expediency or in expediency of a separation, which however are of no weight till the lawfulness of a separation be determined; and concerning which, I would again say, that nothing this way should by any

means be published to the world, as it would necessarily set all the world a disputing. Those who dissent from your judgment, would probably print in their turn ; and this matter would quickly be canvassed in every society in England, it is easy to see with what effect. I heartily wish there may be no printing about it ; and that if there be any difference among the principal people, it may be determined in the fear of God, among themselves : nay, I would not it should be so much as mentioned to any one soul besides. For you know how little able any of us are to bear disputes, and what inveterate enemies debates are to brotherly love and godly edification.

Now as to any expediency (the lawfulness of a separation supposed) that the Methodists separate, the inquiry is, to what end ? Will it probably promote, or probably hinder the interests of Christ's kingdom ? I submit these inquiries to your consideration.

1. Will it be likely to make the body of Methodists more confirmed Christians ? If it be said, yes, for hereby they will not hear God's word badly taught, nor be present at a slovenly performance of his worship, and will have the word and worship in Gospel purity and simplicity ; it must be weighed on the other hand, how many will be lost who will not go in with a separation, how many will be hurt by dispute, how teachers sufficient in number or ability, may be found for the several congregations, how discipline can be preserved so as that the word and worship shall be done to edification ? Whether the

Methodists will not be more apt to decay, being then either left quietly alone, or attacked for their separation, not their practice, as now, which will have an evident tendency to make them rest upon their separation, &c. &c.?

2. Will it render the Methodists more useful to others? There is not the least appearance of it, but just the contrary. Hereby Methodists will come insensibly to separate themselves from all conversation with others. Hereby others will be afraid of them, and few will come near them.

3. What effect will it probably have upon bystanders? (1) Upon those ministers who are zealous for the power of godliness? Will it not throw a prodigious objection in their way, and put it more out of their power to preserve the interests of religion by any schemes which are not common, particularly by societies? This seems an important matter, as many are raised up of this sort, and there is good hope of many more. (2) Upon those who are coming nearer the truth; can it be expected they will not stumble at it? (3) Upon the infidels and Socinians; will they not be glad they are fairly rid of you? (4) Upon every man in England who would do service; will it not be a bar to him? (5) Upon every careless sinner; will it not supply him with somewhat to defend himself?

On all these accounts, a separation seems inexpedient; but on the other hand there is a strong expediency, (1) That the Methodists should remain in the Church, and *with the strictest observance possible,*

of all the laws of it. The more regular they are, the readier access will they gain, and the more evidently will the difference appear, where we should always endeavour to make it seen, in the power and practice of godliness.

(2) That if any of them depart, you Sir, do not follow them, but declare publicly against it. Such a conduct in you, would probably reconcile the hearts of multitudes to you, and those who should abide with you in the Church ; while for my own part, (and I dare believe I speak the general sense of the kingdom) I should make little account of the separatists.

I shall be glad if any thing I have said may be of the least service upon the present weighty matter ; and shall very willingly give you my further sentiments relating to it, if at any time you desire them. I have but one word more to add, which is that if you determine to print your pamphlet, you will first lay it before some judicious person who is not immediately connected with you, such as the excellent ¹ Mr. Adam, to whom you may direct to be left at Mr. Manby's, Bookseller, in Hull, Yorkshire, whom I may possibly consult upon this occasion, having a literary correspondence with him ; and that I shall wish to see a good many things left out of it, but

¹ Under this word Mr. Adam made a mark in a copy of this letter, and added at the bottom of the page, " Woe be to me if I do not say from my heart,—' God be merciful to me a sinner.' "

most particularly that clause about the Athanasian Creed.

I am Rev. Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

Though unworthy Brother,

SAMUEL WALKER.

Mr. Wesley's state of mind at this critical period, will be seen most clearly from his own words in his answer to Mr. Walker.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

You greatly oblige me by speaking your thoughts so fully, and the more by giving me hopes of seeing your further sentiments upon so nice and important an affair. I did not delay one day to follow your advice with regard to Mr. Adam, but sent him by the very next post a copy of those papers ; although I am satisfied already as to the publishing them, and have laid aside that design, the reasons you urge against the expediency of it being abundantly sufficient. But you seem a little to misapprehend what we speak of hearing Predestinarian Preachers.¹ We find by large experience, that this is " deadly poison" not in *itself*, but *to the members of our Societies*. This we know to be an unquestionable truth, and it was a truth necessary to be observed, nay, and strongly insisted on, (though without any design of

¹ This alludes, I presume, to some observation in Mr. Wesley's pamphlet, which Mr. Walker conceived to be " bearing hard on Mr. Whitfield, &c."

bearing hard upon any particular person) when many were enlarging on the “poisonous doctrines” which they heard at many of *their parish churches*.

All that you say concerning the inexpediency of a separation from the Church I readily allow, as likewise, that the first and main question must be “Is it lawful to separate?” Accordingly this was debated first, and yet at large, in seven or eight long conversations. And it was then only, when we could not agree concerning this, that we proceeded to weigh the expediency of it.

As to the grounds on which those who plead for a separation from the Church proceed, some of them have weighed the point long and deeply. They have very particularly, and with earnest and continued prayer, considered the lawfulness of it. And they allowed “If it be lawful to abide therein, then it is not lawful to separate.” But they aver, “It is not lawful to abide therein,” and that for the following reasons.

First, with regard to the liturgy itself, though they allow it is in the general, one of the most excellent human compositions that ever was, yet they think it is both absurd and sinful to declare such an assent and consent as is required, to any merely human composition. Again, though they do not object to the use of forms, yet they dare not confine themselves to them. And, in this form, (the book of common prayer) there are several things which they apprehend to be contrary to scripture.

Secondly, as to the laws of the Church, if they

include the Canons and Decretals (both which are received as such in our courts) they think, “the latter the very dregs of popery, and that many of the former, the Canons of 1603, are as grossly wicked as absurd.” And over and above the objections which they have to several particular Canons, they think, “that the spirit which they breathe throughout, is truly popish and antichristian; that nothing can be more diabolical than the *ipso facto* excommunication so often denounced therein; that the whole method of executing these canons, the process used in our spiritual courts, is too bad to be tolerated, not in a Christian, but in a Mahometan or Pagan nation.”¹

Thirdly, with respect to the ministers, they doubt “whether there are not many of them whom God hath not sent, inasmuch as they neither live the Gospel nor teach it; neither indeed can, seeing they do not know it. They doubt the more, because themselves disdain that inward call to the ministry, which is at least as necessary as the outward. And they are not clear whether it be lawful to attend the ministrations of those whom God hath not sent to minister.”

Fourthly. “The doctrines usually taught by these and indeed by a great majority of the church ministers, they think are not only wrong, but fundamentally so, and subversive of the whole Gospel. They therefore doubt whether it be lawful to bid them God speed, or to have any fellowship with them.”

¹ The spirit which stirred up the lay-preachers is sufficiently visible in the violent way in which they expressed their objections to the Church.

I will freely acknowledge that I cannot answer these objections to my own satisfaction. So that my conclusion, which I cannot yet give up, that it is lawful to continue in the Church, stands I know not how; at most without any premises that are able to bear its weight.

My difficulty is very much increased by one of your observations. I know the original doctrines of the Church are sound. I know her worship (in the main) is pure and scriptural. But, "if the essence of the Church of England, considered as such, consists in her orders and laws," (many of which I myself can say nothing for) "and not in her worship and doctrines," those who separate from her, have a far stronger plea than I was ever sensible of.

At present I apprehend those, and those only to separate from the Church, who either renounce her fundamental doctrines, or refuse to join in her public worship. As yet we have done neither, nor have we taken one step further than we were convinced is our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this, that we have, 1. preached abroad; 2. prayed extempore; 3. formed societies; and 4. permitted preachers who were not episcopally ordained. And were we pushed on this side, were there no alternative allowed, we should judge it our bounden duty, rather wholly to separate from the Church, than to give up any one of these points. Therefore if we cannot stop a separation without stopping lay-preachers, the case is clear, we cannot stop it at all.

But if we *permit* them, should we not do more?

Should we not *appoint* them rather, since the bare permission puts the matter quite out of our hands, and deprives us of all our influence? In a great measure it does; therefore to appoint them is far more expedient, if it be lawful. But is it lawful for presbyters, circumstanced as we are, to appoint other ministers? This is the very point wherein we desire advice, being afraid of leaning to our own understandings.

It is undoubtedly “needful” (as you observe) to come to some resolution on this point, and the sooner the better.” I therefore rejoice to hear, that you think this matter may be better and more inoffensively ordered, and that a method may be found, which conducted with prudence and patience, will reduce the constitution of Methodism to due order, and render the Methodists under God more instrumental to the ends of practical religion.

This Sir, is the very thing I want; I must therefore beg your sentiments on this head, and that as particularly as your other engagements will allow. Wishing you more and more of the wisdom from above,

I remain, Rev. Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

Bristol, Sep. 24, 1755.

Mr. Wesley always declared, that one of the pleasures of this difficult question was his being made acquainted with Mr. Walker, whose usefulness he cordially admitted. We shall see hereafter, how he

answered his own query about the power of presbyters,—but it is now expedient to give our attention to the reply to this letter from the pen of Mr. Walker.

October 20, 1755.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I would not transmit to you Mr. Adam's letter, without acknowledging your favour of the 24th, and adding my thoughts upon the matter of it. Those who press you for a separation, insist it is not lawful to abide in the Church, you say, upon these considerations. "1. Because of the assent and consent required to the Liturgy; and this especially, because of several things therein, which they apprehend to be contrary to Scripture. And also, because they dare not confine themselves to forms." These are no other than the objections which the dissenters have made: and whatever weight they might have, yet I believe are not in the least a ground upon which these gentlemen proceed in pushing for a separation. For why was not this objection made sooner by them? Did they not know that such objections were? Or, in truth, are they not *desirous* to separate; and so, willing to take hold of any thing whereby they may persuade themselves it is unlawful to continue in the Church? Besides, the assent and consent can never be required in such sense as is imagined; which were to suppose the compilers of the Liturgy thought their human composition infallible.

It must be understood, as assenting and consenting to the Liturgy, as being in such manner agreeable to the Scriptures, that you contentedly join in it, and willingly conform to it. There is but one book in the world without defect; and if the unavoidable defects of men were a sufficient ground for separating from a church, it is easy to see there would be no abiding under any establishment that could be invented. And how is it they *dare* not confine themselves to a form in public ministration? This is going far indeed. Appeal to their own consciences; they cannot say this in the presence of God, that they dare not confine themselves to a form in public worship, wherein only they are required to do so as I can find? Upon the whole I ask, did the first thoughts of separation arise from this difficulty with regard to the Liturgy? I dare answer in the negative. That must have sprung from a supposed necessity of having ordained ministers over the Methodists. And if this were the case, what is there more in this objection than the sophistry of a deceiving heart, by which they who make it may have been too easily led away? When we have a mind to do a thing, experience shows how easy it is to find a reason for doing it, and to deceive ourselves out of the truth.—“ 2. Because of the laws of the church if they include the canons.” If the canons were never authorized by act of Parliament, they cannot be properly part of the Church Establishment, which as such is merely a civil thing. The Church Establishment binds the conscience as a civil constitution, which it becomes by the authority

of government ; wherefore, whatever is not so established (I mean by the king, lords, and commons) not being an act of government, cannot bind the conscience. But you are doubtless better informed upon this point, than I can be, and must needs have observed, that such a submission hath never been exacted to the canons, as hath been to the Rubric and Liturgy, which I take to contain the laws of our Church. As to the spiritual courts, may not a man lawfully remain in the Church, because of them ? If discipline be lost, we lament it ; but, surely, nothing shall revive discipline but a revival of vital religion, for which we ought to pray and labour in our several places. I must needs observe here again, that your friends are seeking occasions, whereby to satisfy themselves in doing that they have before set their hearts upon. Excuse me if I cannot help seeing at the bottom of this a factious unsubmissive spirit, which is more evident in their third and fourth reasons for a separation : (viz.) “ Because many of the ministers are bad men, disclaim an inward call, and preach contrary to the Gospel.” What hath this to do with the Establishment ? *These are not the Establishment.* We must separate from the notions and practices of all such, and thereby shew ourselves true members of the Church of England. Were the faults of ministers a sufficient cause of departing from a church, there could be no such thing as remaining long in any church whatever. Yea, and what security is there that by and by for the same reasons, it should not be as necessary to separate from the Methodists them-

selves? Such a principle can possibly produce nothing but confusion as long as the world lasts, since it would lay every private man under an obligation of conscience to leave his church, when he thought many of the ministry belonging to it did not live and preach as they ought. You can hardly think of any thing which would be more destructive of love, peace, and order. After all, I heartily wish your friends would think, (at least you would think for them) what manner of spirit they are of. It is evident they affect to be teachers, and so would persuade themselves and you it is not lawful to abide in the Church, by such arguments as would never have got into their heads, had not a conceit of themselves, and an ambition of being ministers, first got into their hearts. I speak thus plainly, because I see they seem almost to have overcome you; and to make you sensible of what I believe neither themselves nor you suspect, that the real foundation of their unkind contest with you, is a lurking vanity and pride of heart.—What I have said upon the second head will make my assertion, that “The essence of the Church consists in her orders and laws, not doctrine and worship,” more easy to you; though perhaps not altogether so, by reason of that point—lay preachers. I cannot think it any how authenticated, for a few clergymen to take upon them to establish a church, and ordain ministers. What you have said concerning the impossibility of laying aside lay-preachers, entirely defeats the scheme I hinted at. However, you shall need maintain your ground with constancy. Do what is right, and fear

no consequences. Sure I am you have much cause to stand firm to your first principles upon this occasion. Many of the clergy up and down are speaking the truth. Should you be deserted by some, there will not be wanting such as will support you, or rather the cause of vital Christianity I am persuaded you have at heart.—As I am not sure whether I have got your direction, be pleased to own the receipt of this in a line to, &c.”¹

When Mr. Walker sent copies of these two last letters for the inspection of Mr. Adam, he inquired of him, “and now what think you? will he be able to stand his ground?” “For my part,” he added, “I think not. I fear he hath too high an opinion of Methodism, and imagines it will be lost if the preachers leave him, which I am fully confirmed they will do, if he will not go with them.” The minutes of the Leeds’ Conference, of 1755, are unhappily lost, but this correspondence now first brought before the public, will tend very much to fill up the chasm thus made in the history of Wesleyanism. A more interesting series of letters has seldom been brought from a long oblivion, before the eye of the Christian world. They are equally remarkable for deep, anxious thought, and for true charity; and well would it be for us all, if our present differences of opinion could be tempered

¹ This copy of Mr. Walker’s letter is taken from an original letter of his to Mr. Adam, in which he inserted it. Having given the argumentative part for his friend’s perusal, he breaks it off thus abruptly, the remainder being immaterial.

with the same gentleness, without any compromise of honest firmness. It is much to be lamented, that John Wesley did not carry on his subsequent disputations in the same placid frame of mind ; but he had men of a different mould from Mr. Walker for his opponents, and the fault is not all his. The letters he wrote on the occasion which now occupies our attention, prove how greatly he was embarrassed by the conduct of his preachers, and the difficulties arising out of his own system. Similar perplexities will ever entangle those who depart from ecclesiastical discipline ; and the fears and doubts which are proved to have agitated the great Wesleyan leader, ought to have due effect on the minds of the reflecting part of his community. They should lead them to consider how far they are justified in standing aloof from the fold he quitted, not without many a struggle with his own conscience, even in times of spiritual drought and pastoral carelessness. Churchmen, moreover, are bound to bear in mind that this last mentioned evil was the great cause of the spread of Methodism and dissent in general. The statements made in the letters of Wesley, and in the history of Walsh relative to the condition of the clergy, are undeniable. But as the period of deadness was disfigured by separation, the time of revival should be graced by union. Could John Wesley be restored to life at this moment, his powers would probably be in a great measure employed in endeavouring to reunite his people to the Church, from which he did not separate, till he had invoked the co-operation of her

ministers in diffusing truth through the land. With respect to this fact, his biographer Watson observes—
“ In 1756 he printed an address to the clergy, plain, affectionate, and powerful ; breathing at once the spirit of an apostle and the feeling of a brother. Happy if that call had been heard. He might, perhaps, be influenced in this, by a still lingering hope of a revival of the spirit of zeal and piety among the ministers of the Established Church ; in which case that separation of his people from the Church, which he began to see as otherwise inevitable, he thought might be prevented.” Such is the language of one of the most pious and enlightened members of the Methodist body. But we pass on to the Correspondence, arising out of the Bristol Conference in 1756, which will form the principal part of the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

LETTERS TO MR. ADAM—CONFERENCE OF 1756—
CORRESPONDENCE OF MR. WALKER WITH J. AND
C. WESLEY, &c.

1756. OBJECT OF J. WESLEY.

The year 1756 forms a most important era in the annals of Methodism ; but the biographers of Wesley seem to have been unacquainted with many of its most remarkable events. It is fortunate therefore, that there still exist letters to illustrate the proceedings of a period so deeply affecting the Church of England, and the cause of religion in general. It was at this time that Wesley published his address to the Clergy, with the latter part of which it will be presently seen that Mr. Walker was highly gratified. Mr. Wesley's designs seem to have been of the purest kind. He had not then resolved to open new channels for the overflowing stream, he was unable to restrain within its ancient bounds. His object was to quicken the inactive members of the establishment and to prevent

separation ; and a nobler aim never called forth the energies of a vigorous mind. Even those who thought little of him as a theologian, were filled with admiration at the purity and fervour of his pious and devoted spirit. “ He hoped,” to use the striking language of Southey, “ to give a new impulse to the Church of England, to awaken its dormant zeal, infuse life into a body where nothing but life was wanting, and lead the way to the performance of duties which the State had blindly overlooked, and the Church had scandalously neglected ; thus would he become the Author of a second Reformation, whereby all that had been left undone in the former, would be completed !” But his appeal was unheeded, and the blame must be divided by the impartial historian, between himself and those who ought to have listened to his remonstrance. His fault was, that he had gone too far in his deviations from the prescribed discipline, creating alarm where he might otherwise have attracted regard ; theirs, an obstinate resistance to all attempts to arouse them from a torpor which wore the awful aspect of death. It is therefore no matter of surprise, that the impetuous spirit of the lay preachers should have urged their leader to depart from the ranks of men, who, deaf to his awakening call, lay asleep in their tents, suffering their arms to rest, and the standard of the cross to remain unfurled, while the tabernacle of the Lord became an easy prey to its foes. Nor can we wonder that many persons whose minds are unaccustomed to deep reflection, or to weigh all the parts of a subject with a view to a sound conclusion,

should warmly defend the course they pursued. But these well-meaning individuals forget that the soldier of Christ is not to follow the inclinations of his own excited mind, but the prescriptions of the divine rule ; in which case, he shall find that when the “ enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.” If therefore it is in unison with scriptural precepts, that men should continue in the branch of Christ’s Church in which they have been enrolled, it is clearly unlawful while the fundamental basis of that Church remains unaltered, to form a schism in the body by separating from it. This was the ground taken by Mr. Walker, “ if it is *lawful* to continue in it, it is *unlawful* to separate from it.” In this opinion, John Wesley seems to have acquiesced, and in the Bristol conference of 1756, expressed his determination to adhere to the Church as long as he lived. This conference appears to have caused his brother Charles the greatest anxiety, and gave rise to the correspondence between him and Mr. Walker, which forms the most attractive feature of this chapter. As however, the present narrative refers not only to the topics contained therein, but to the life of the chief subject of its pages, it will not be improper to give precedence to a few letters to Mr. Adam, which mention the affairs of the Wesleyans, in the midst of other matters too interesting to be omitted. Their contents also throw light upon the progress of Truth in those extraordinary days of revival. Not to insert them entire, would be therefore unpardonable, and no other part of the work

offers so convenient a place for this purpose. The first letter to Mr. Adam alludes to his preface to Mr. Walker's excellent work, *The Christian*, as well as to a letter from J. Wesley, he had sent him for his perusal and observations. It is as follows, and was written after a long silence.

March, 25th, 1756.

DEAR SIR,

My long silence must needs have put your friendship to the proof, and with any but a very generous mind, must have brought me under the imputation of ingratitude. But indeed it is not easy to conceive what my engagements have been these months, and how many extraordinary incidents have come in, which have not allowed me to answer any letters. Among others, you will be sorry to hear that we have lost another of our club, who died some time since of a fever; a gentleman who had not been with us much more than a year, of strong parts, and no inconsiderable attainments, by whose death I am left without all manner of assistance, in a place where there is so very much to do.

It is high time I should thank you for the preface you have so kindly prefixed to my little volume. I have not the least doubt it will be of service, not only in illustrating the design of the Sermons, by a clear epitome of them, but especially by those strong observations in the former part of it, regarding the corruption of man's will, and those doctrines which

are the consequences of it. You have observed, (and I had made the same remark) that that point should have had a larger place in the sermons, and I heartily thank you for supplying it in so full and spirited a manner. The whole of it, dear Sir, is the very thing I could have wished, and neither my friends nor I could find any thing to be taken from or added to it. It is therefore printed exactly after your copy. I have ordered my bookseller in London to send to Mr. Manby for you, six copies of this edition, which I desire you to accept as a small token of my respect and gratitude, and one of which I shall be glad, if you please, may be presented to the worthy Archdeacon,¹ to whom I beg to be remembered respectfully.

I return you herewith Mr. W's² letter, which is indeed a strange one, and together with your caution, determined me to drop the correspondence, lest I might do mischief where I had no prospect of doing service. There hath been such an aberration from the old principles, that those who would do true Christianity service, know not with any distinction, what the vital truths of it are, nor where to find it. I have too much cause to fear, there is not one of those zealous persons in London, who speak with so apostolical a freedom and boldness, that is not puzzled, confused, and either overrunning or falling short in some capital point, except perhaps Mr. Murden and Mr. Whitfield. And the matter is

¹ Mr. Basset.

² Mr. Wesley's to Mr. Adam.

possibly, more deplorable near Bath and Bristol, where there are no less than eight clergymen now lately joined together in a club, for mutual establishment in preaching the Gospel. They are all young men, their hearts full of zeal for Christ; but they have among them so much mysticism, Moravianism, and Methodism, and not any of them capable of setting the others right, that at present there is not much to be expected from them. I have a correspondence with three of them; and by means of the youngest of those, Mr. Brown, who is a sensible, modest and teachable person (I suppose the most so of any among them), I am not without hope of doing them some service. I am drawing up some papers for his use, and which he will communicate to the rest; and design when they are finished, to submit them to your inspection and correction. Indeed, Sir, it is our peculiar duty, I mean Mr. Bassett's, yours and mine, to bestir ourselves. What can we do to help those of our brethren to the truth simply and plainly, who would preach it, did they know it? I know no one so capable of being serviceable this way as yourself, and wish you would draw up some short treatise for the instruction and direction of young clergymen, which might be handed to them in a private manner, in manuscript, and perhaps hereafter be published. Such a thing would be attended with its use, not only near Bath, but especially in this county, where I can with pleasure assure you there are already some young clergymen who shew a gracious disposition. There are four of them at least, with whom I have some

connection on this score, and we have hopes of some others who are near the ministry. Be pleased to take this whole matter into consideration, and to assist us with your prayers, advice, and other help.

You will be pleased to hear also there is a spirit of catechising sprung up in a good many places. This is what gives me the greatest hope ; while there is reasonable ground of expectation it will go farther in a more useful way. Your lectures have been used by two gentlemen of my acquaintance to introduce themselves and the people into this good work ; and there is a third who reads them before his congregation. The people every where are pleased where this duty hath been attempted, and in most places seem to be calling on their ministers for it. For my part, I have growing content in it, and have reason to judge it by much the most profitable part of my ministry.

The Lord is with us still ; and the work prospers greatly under my two friends, Mr. Michel at Verian, and Mr. Penrose at Penryn. At this place we are still advancing. The society thrives, and hath peace. The formalists are generally confounded, have given over gainsaying, and are forced to own themselves sinners. I wish it were with more heartfelt concern ; but at present we have few *harmless people*, and *good sort of people* among us.

In such circumstances, my dear Sir, you shall need warn me not to be highminded. And I request you will always do it with a friendly freedom : for there is none of all my brethren I can so join with in a perfect conformity of sentiments, and with whom I

desire to be more conformed in practice. Your communications of this sort have done me good, and taught me to be much on my guard against that secret pride which would needs persuade me I am something and do something, when indeed I am nothing ; and when any thing is done God doeth it himself. I have enough, it is true, to humble me in the present and the past ; but of all others I find it the hardest lesson to preserve a humbling sense of my vileness and insufficiency. Yet when I lose the sense of my sinfulness, conceit meets with a more feeble opposition ; and as the sense of my insufficiency is remitted, I stumble. Also unbelief goes on in equal pace with my pride ; the objects of faith are hid from me, nor mix themselves in my heart, constraining it to heavenly-mindedness and communion with God, to a care of pleasing him in all things, to submission, patience, &c. Every thing goes wrong with me, as pride is unmortified. Yet it continually pleads for indulgence, and while I am writing to you, would suggest to me a desire of your commendation. But what gives me most cause to quarrel with this pride of my heart, is that it still contends for the esteem of men, and raises up in me certain fears of men's faces which I would give the world to be rid of. The esteem of men was once my idol ; I courted it every way, and was so unhappy as to get a great deal of it by the basest compliances. You will hardly imagine what it hath cost me in inward pangs to get the mastery of it, if yet I may say it is in subjection ; for sometimes I am in circumstances, in which I find

myself under a constraint, which I have reason to believe I do not always oppose as I ought. I open my heart very freely. Communicate to me your experience on these points. I take this to be a principal branch of the communion of saints.

Let me know of the state of your health : you complained formerly of a nervous disorder. And your ministry : doth the Lord prosper the work of your hands ? Be assured, dear Sir, that your letters are peculiarly useful and agreeable, though I am so shamefully backward in answering them. But I have now so ordered my affairs, as to have it in my power to be more regular for the future. Good Sir, do not follow the very bad example of

Your truly affectionate and greatly obliged,
S. W.

March 25.

P. S.—It hath seemed that the earthquakes have done us some good here. We are near Lisbon, and have great intercourse with it, which was a motive to my printing the sermon I preached here on the fast-day. I am sorry I forgot to desire my bookseller would send it you. It hath nothing but its freedom of speech to recommend it.

It is impossible to conceive a more lovely Christian spirit, than that which breathes through the whole of this letter. We also learn from it that a greater activity was manifesting itself in the Church of England, than is generally imagined to have animated its members

in those times. The custom has been to reckon *all* the diligence to the credit of the Wesleyans or dissenters, and not a small degree of blame is attributed to those who have ventured to assert the contrary,¹ and to claim for the members of our national establishment the meed of praise which is their due. Those who would preserve the chaplets on the tombs of Wesley and Whitfield, ought not to tread with heedless steps upon the flowers that truth would scatter on the modest turf which covers the ashes of the faithful clergy of their times. The more thoroughly the history of evangelical religion is investigated, as respects its progress in the eventful days of the last century, the stronger will the proofs appear that its most solid foundations were laid by churchmen. This does not detract from the honour due to zealous men of other communities, nor is any thing of the kind intended. But we proceed to the next letter of the excellent curate of Truro, to his Wintringham friend.

May 10, 1756.

DEAR SIR,

You have been a close observer of your own heart ; your communications, therefore, are par-

¹ For myself, I may say that I have received no unmeasured censure for what I have advanced upon this point in former publications. I reply however merely by *facts*, without any unfriendly retort on those who have animadverted on my statements.

ticularly useful and animating. Indeed I need them, and am not unthankful to God for them. You rest the matter of our justification and the principle of gospel obedience just where it should be, in the righteousness of Christ. I see the truth of it in the experience of all the hearty Christians I know. As far as any depart from making Christ their righteousness,¹ I plainly see they are defective in humility, and hunted with doubts and fears, and their conduct is actuated by the narrow principle of self: at bottom they mean to serve themselves in all they do toward God and man. From the cross I would derive all my comfort, and all my principles of action. But I find it no easy matter to receive, and refer all to it. You are no stranger to the many conflicts of a Christian, and what need he shall have of patience, because of unbelief, pride, sloth, and manifold other spiritual evils. It is no small attainment to hate corruption truly, and yet bear with oneself patiently. Nevertheless, I take impatience with ourselves to be among the most glaring proofs of unbelief. Our own will must needs be meddling; and though we seem persuaded Christ is able to keep that we have committed unto him, still we shall want to have it after our humour, and at our own time, carving for ourselves the dispensations, discipline, and comforts of the Spirit. My constitutional turn is timidity, where-with the desire of man's esteem shamefully co-operated in the former years of my life. Both together made it

¹ All this is evidently in allusion to the Wesleyan view of imputed righteousness.

a mountainous difficulty to look opposers in the face, and maintain the boldness of a Christian profession. You will not conceive what pain and grief, conflicts and struggles, this hath cost me. To deny it hath often been like cutting off a right hand ; and often it hath prevailed. To this day, though I am hoping it hath not power enough to make me do what I should not, yet it sometimes, in particular circumstances, restrains me from doing what I ought ; I mean, when among a company of carnal persons, I am often too like Sampson shorn of his locks, without that freedom which God's honour and their case plainly demand. This is the great thorn in my flesh which earnestly, perhaps impatiently, I want should be drawn out ; while at the same time I see the justice of God in leaving it there, and have, I think, some of my clearest evidences and most plentiful matter of praise and thankfulness, from the success given me against it. Give me a word or two of direction on this head ; and tell me your temper and conduct when providentially brought among gainsayers, and such as know not the fear of the Lord.

I cannot help mentioning again my former proposal. Somewhat which might open a door to young clergymen (indeed I see small hope of doing much for others that need it) into the plain knowledge of Gospel principles, and direct them into the general steps of a ministerial conduct, is the thing wanted. If I recommend it to my friend rather than undertake it myself, it is because of his evidently greater fitness for the work. Do not mistake me for a man of

knowledge, nor mistake yourself. You must give me leave to say you are well fitted for it, and I know no other but you that is so. I desire to decline nothing through indolence, yet I dare not venture on things too high for me ; nevertheless, I shall not be wanting to lend my hand in the epistolary way to any who may need it.

Will you forgive me the wrong I have done you ? I knew not how to tell you of my correspondence with several dissenters. But your letter hath perfectly relieved me, and I perfectly rejoice with you in that spirit of moderation, that is grown up among persons of various denominations. It was in a very providential manner I was brought acquainted with them four or five years since.

The occasion was this. About that time, one of my young converts was going to London to perfect himself in his trade. A friend here recommended him to the care of the since famous Mr. Cruden ¹ *corrector of the people*. That poor gentleman soon after grew disordered, and my boy was without any one to guide him. Mr. Cruden had spoken honourably of old Dr. Guyse his pastor, and I had read some of his excellent works. In this plunge, I ventured to send to the Dr. with a letter, requesting he might have leave to wait on him occasionally for direction. The good old man gladly consented, and favoured me with a letter in the true spirit of a

¹ Author of the Concordance,—further mention will be made of him hereafter.

catholic Christian. This commenced a correspondence, by which I have been greatly benefited and helped. And through this channel, it hath been enlarged to some other excellent ministers among them. Among others, both Mr. Winter and Mr. Fawcett have given me encouraging epistles, which I have not yet found time to answer. The former married a daughter of Mr. Williams of Kidderminster, whose letter to his wife when he was near death, I send herewith. He was one of the most useful christians of his time, a clothier I believe, a man of sense and knowledge. The letter itself doth but confirm the judgment all his acquaintances had before conceived of him.

I am glad your lectures sell at so quick a rate. If the dissenters are willing to recommend them, I see not why they may not be allowed a bookseller of their own, if you are under no engagements with Mr. Hitch to the contrary. If Mr. Winter designs to recommend them, his influence can be only among dissenters; and if Mr. Winter be like others of his brethren, he means no more by it, than to encourage a sale among their people. I proposed your lectures just after their first coming out, to Mr. Darracot, of Wellington in Somersetshire, to be recommended among dissenters as a good means of uniting us together more nearly in peace and love, and on many accounts, the lectures are peculiarly fit for that end. Yet, if you add the name of a dissenting bookseller to your title page, and would have my opinion upon it, I do not altogether approve of —— who

seems to have his own interest too much in view a good deal; and otherwise I find Buckland is better liked among them, and of more influence. Booksellers are sadly extravagant. Though you give the copy, the price will not be much abated. Suppose Mr. Winter should take the trouble of getting them printed, bound, and dispersed, only leaving with the booksellers as many as was needful? I know such things have been done, and by this means the book would be cheaper and you get something.

I am sorry your fast sermon was not printed. If you can conveniently send it to me, I shall be glad to see it. Perhaps on the reputation of your lectures, an impression of 500 copies will sell next winter.

Mr. Haweis, the young gentleman I formerly spoke of, and his friend Mr. Burnet, are returned to us from Oxford. Their fortunes, nor indeed opportunities of improvement, would not admit of their long continuance there. They purpose studying with me and my friend and father, Mr. Conon, the schoolmaster of this place, till next spring, by which time, we doubt not they will be well qualified. They are both good scholars, and have a tolerable foundation in Hebrew. I have no doubt of their heart qualifications for the work. In truth, they are lovely and promising young men. Yet we know not how to offer them to our Bishop. Can you think of a method to get them ordained by means of the Archdeacon or otherwise?

I was prodigiously pleased with the latter part of Mr. Wesley's address. He does not do so well at

head work,—but his heart! That reproves and confounds me. I hear he is dying in Ireland; and hath left the care of his people with Mr. Whitfield and his brother. While I am speaking of Ireland, it puts me in remembrance that some one or other there, hath printed and given away a thousand copies of *The Christian*. Many soldiers (and very serious ones they were) had them in their pockets with them at Plymouth, where they were quartered some time in their way from Dublin to America. These soldiers were *Swadlers*, the name of Methodists in Ireland.

Conversion work seems at some stand in this place. Pray for us, dear Sir, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified among us. I earnestly intercede for you in this behalf, and am, with respectful compliments to Mr. Basset,

Yours in the bonds of Christian Love,
S. W.

As further notice will be hereafter taken of the happy friendship existing between Mr. Walker and certain mild and pious dissenters of his day, it is not necessary to advert to it here. Mr. J. Wesley having recovered from his illness, was expected at Bristol in the autumn of the year in which this letter was written, for the purpose of holding a conference with his preachers. His brother Charles, in his great anxiety on the subject of their meeting, wrote as follows to solicit the judicious interference of Mr. Walker.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

Bristol, Aug. 7th, 1756.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I have often thought of writing to you on the subject of your letters to my brother, to which I most heartily subscribe. He is coming hither to a conference with his preachers. Another letter from you might, by the blessing of God, confirm him in his calling. He seems resolved to temporize with them no longer. Mr. Grimshaw, a man after your own heart, is coming to strengthen his hands. We shall have a private conference before the general one. You speak *the very thing*—that my brother *must* come to a resolution; *must* know his own mind and act consistently for the residue of his days. On the 23rd instant our conference begins. The Lord put it into your heart to speak a word in season to my brother, who as you justly express it, was “almost overcome by his preachers.” Foreseeing the consequence, I brought him some time ago, to sign the following agreement. “March 10th, 1752. We whose names are underwritten, being clearly and fully convinced,—1. That the success of the present work of God, does in a great measure depend on the entire union of all the labourers employed therein.—2. That our present call is chiefly to the members of that church wherein we have been brought up,—are *absolutely determined* by the grace of God, (1) To abide in the closest union with each other, and never speak, do, or suffer, any thing which tends to weaken that

union. (2) Never to leave the communion of the Church of England without the consent of all whose names are subjoined.

CHAS. WESLEY.

JOHN JONES.

WM. KENT.

JOHN DOWNES.

JOHN WESLEY.

JOHN NELSON."

I should have broken off from the Methodists and my brother at that time, but for the above agreement ; which I think every preacher should sign, or leave us. What I desire of my brother is, 1. That the unsound, unrecoverable preachers should be let depart just now. 2. That the wavering should be confirmed, if possible, and established in their calling. 3. That the sound ones should be received into the strictest union and confidence, and as soon as may be, *prepared for orders.*

To this end, my brother ought, in my judgment, to declare and avow in the strongest and most explicit manner, his resolution to live and die in the communion of the Church of England. 1. To take all proper pains to instruct and ground both his preachers and his flock, in the same. A treatise is much wanting on this subject, which he might write and spread through all his societies. 2. To wait with me on the archbishop who has desired to see him, and tell him our whole design. 3. To advise, as far as they think proper, with such of our brethren the clergy as know the truth, and do nothing without their approbation. I was advised long ago by lady Huntingdon to write to you on this subject, but could not do it till now. Your concern for the cause

of God will, I doubt not, induce you to do all you can to promote it, and to hinder the work from being destroyed; although it would not be destroyed (as I often tell the Methodists) even if they all desert it, and turn aside to vain sectarian janglings. The Lord has set, and is still setting watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem, who cry day and night and give him no rest, till he establish and make our Sion a praise in the earth. Our continued prayer is daily answering by sending more labourers into his harvest. A multitude of the priests, I am persuaded, will soon be obedient to the faith. And I pray God you may take the matter out of our weak hands, and approve yourselves in all things able ministers of Jesus Christ. For his sake remember at the throne of grace,

Dear Sir,

Your meanest fellow servant,

C. WESLEY.

In consequence of this letter Mr. Walker, wrote to Mr. John Wesley in the following terms.—

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I am informed you are about to hold a conference upon the matter of your lay-preachers; and also desired to renew my correspondence with you on that head at this time, when I hope something decisive will be done, and the constitution of Methodism put on a footing that shall render it more serviceable to the Church of Christ and the Church of

England. Indeed every friend of true religion and of our establishment, cannot but wish that somewhat may be effectually done in your lifetime, after which I think nothing can be reasonably expected. If you, Sir, who must needs have such authority with the Methodists, as no other can possibly have after your death, yet find it hard to keep things in order, you may easily foresee the confusion that shall follow, when upon your departure, all you leave behind you shall consider themselves of equal weight and moment. The restraint of your authority gone, some of your preachers will be separating, and others will be disputing, to the evident ruin of Methodism, to the new disgrace of the Church of England, and what is worse than both, to the dishonour and hindrance of practical godliness. You will weigh this in your thoughts, and see the absolute necessity of doing something by way of prevention. While also your state of health and the uncertainty of your life considered, the necessity of doing something at this conference is manifest.

Do you ask what is that which ought to be done? I answer, settle things on such a footing as you wish they may be in after your death. Do you fear you are not able? Allow me to say, you want not power, if you do not want resolution. If you determine to come closer to the Church of England, as I doubt not you wish to do, you have only to declare your resolution, and act in concert thereupon with such of your people as will join with you; and I doubt not you will not have many that will leave you. Say

some should depart : why such are departed already in principle, so that we should surely do better without them ; and in fact, they will depart whenever opportunity serves, though for the present you should keep them by compliance.

Do you ask what I wish you to do ? Indeed your circumstance is at present perplexed, and you shall need to have courage as well as conduct, to act suitably to it. The general advice I would offer, is to follow your own conscience without any regard to consequences, which are altogether in God's hand, and by which we ought not to be biassed in the least sort in any point of duty, which were to do evil that good may come. Keep your eye on the word of God, and forget not your office as a minister of the Church of England (of which we ministers ought to regard ourselves the peculiar guardians whilst we continue in it) and then give way to the dictates of your own mind, without regard to any consideration whatsoever. Such a simplicity of conduct will give you great ease, whatever be the issue. You must carefully distinguish between conscience and prudence, lest while the former bids you act, the latter engage you to delay or temporize.—More particularly, (1) I would have you to keep full in view the interest of Christ's church in general, and of practical religion, not considering the Church of England or the cause of Methodism, but as subordinate thereto. (2) I wish you to keep in view the unlawfulness of a separation from the Church of England, considering it on the whole as a sound branch of Christ's church. (3) I would wish you to

declare yourself without the least reserve on the point, as one satisfied therein, and fully determined to dispute that matter no more with any who dissent from you in opinion. (4) I would wish you immediately to act with vigour, in consequence of such declaration ; requiring your preachers to declare themselves, suffering such to depart as will not join you herein, and making all your societies acquainted with what you have done. (5) I would wish you to do this at the approaching conference. You may never have another. Delays will make matters worse. The disaffected will grow upon you, corrupt others, and imagine you are afraid of them ; while also in so unsettled a state of things, nothing can go forward, the enemy has advantage, and the interests of vital religion must suffer. (6) I would wish as many of your preachers as are fit for it, might be ordained, and that the others might be fixed to certain societies, and that in my judgment, as inspectors and readers, rather than preachers.

I know, dear Sir, the thing lying on you must be both difficult and disagreeable ; but after all, the main difficulty must be within yourself. A treacherous, corrupt heart will be apt to plead the reputation of Methodism, and your own reputation, together with the reproach you may bring on yourself from those without ; which may appear under such colours as the less opportunity of doing good, and the disgrace that may fall on true religion. You will need watch your heart above all. And it is herein I am peculiarly instant on your behalf. That the infinitely wise God may

direct you to such measures, as shall contribute most to his glory and your comfort, is the unfeigned prayer of your very unworthy

Fellow-Labourer in the Gospel,

S. WALKER.

P. S.—It occurs to me as a thing of importance, which might perhaps slip you in the haste of this business, that whatever you do, be so conducted as to give no offence to dissenters of any denomination, lest unadvisedly old disputes and party heats should be revived.

To Mr. Charles Wesley's letter, Mr. Walker replied :—

To the Rev. Charles Wesley.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I AM greatly concerned about the issue of the conference your brother is to have with his lay-preachers. We had a short correspondence on that head last winter, wherein I saw he was greatly pushed by his preachers, unwilling to part with them, and yet not caring to part from the Church of England. To say the truth, I was fearful of going any further with him at that time, lest while I was arguing against a separation upon such arguments as entered into the heart of the matter, I might unwarily drive him into it.

The point I had then in view, was that which is now the occasion of your conference. You will give

me leave to open myself fully upon it. A church of Christ is a congregation of Christian people, where the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly ministered. A particular church is that where these things, essential to the being of a church of Christ, are executed with such appointments as are peculiar to that particular church. Consequently, the essence of a particular church is not that wherein it agrees with all the churches of Christ, but that which is particular to itself. And so it is by submitting to these particular rites, that a man professes himself a member of that particular church ; whereas to depart from them is to separate from it. All that can be left to a particular church is to settle government and modes of worship, because all other things are settled already by Christ. If this be well considered, it appears that lay-preachers being contrary to the constitution of the Church of England, are as far as that point goes, a separation from it. It is quite another question, whether lay-preachers be agreeable to the appointment of the Spirit respecting the ministry ; though I suppose some of the more sensible may have had serious thoughts on that head in reading the Scripture, and would be better content had they an outward regular commission. But this is not the point. Is lay-preaching agreeable with the constitution of the Church of England ? And if not, is it not a separation in part, inasmuch as it offends against one of the greatest ends of our Church Establishment ? That it was so, was not perhaps seen at first, but hath now come out by experience ; while it

appears that lay-preachers are found at the head of so many distinct bodies of people, to whom they minister the word, and who only want the sacraments at their hands, to be as much particular churches as any other. The matter is not, whether lay-preachers be needful, or what their calling may be. Be the one and the other as it will, the thing is plainly inconsistent with the discipline of the Church of England ; and so in one essential point setting up a church within her, which cannot be of her. You easily see what an impossibility there is [that] a ministration of the word in a manner contrary to the Establishment, should be consistent with that Establishment, where one of the two great points that constitute that practical Establishment, is its peculiar way of appointment respecting the ministration of the word. I speak the whole of this, because your brother did not seem to see the thing in that light. The consequence of this is, lay-preaching is a separation in part. When, therefore, it is asked, shall we separate from the Church of England ? it should rather be asked, shall we make the separation we have begun, a separation in all forms ? And if we do not think ourselves allowed to do this, shall we unite with her ? We do not, unless lay-preaching is laid aside.

Yourselves must judge of the call and necessity of lay-preachers, whether that or any thing beside may justify a separation. If not, and a separation be not found lawful, you must even be united, which it is evident you shall not be effectually, till the case of lay-preaching be laid aside. Your difficulties will all

remain, while they¹ do ; you will live on the brink of a perfect separation ; and there will never be wanting those among you who will be calling out for it.

Meantime, there is a continual bar kept up between you and any regular clergyman, who cannot in conscience fall in with this measure. The most he can do is not to forbid them. He cannot take them by the hand. And so there must be two disunited ministrations of the word in the same place, by people who yet do call themselves of the Church of England. You cannot but observe, there shall never be a nearer connection between the most zealous clergy of the Church of England and the Methodists than now subsists, until this block be taken out of the way ; which, considering your most earnest desire of being serviceable among us, it will be worth your while to consider.

After all these considerations, might not an expedient be found out, which might correspond with the word of God and the Church of England ; and, at the same time, both remove all objections, and render the body of Methodists more useful ? I have long and often thought of such a thing, and should have mentioned it to your brother last year, had I thought the temper of the time would have borne it. Mr. Vivian, of Cornwood, is here, and bids me use his name in confirmation of my scheme ; which is, (1) That as many of the lay-preachers as are fit for, and can be procured ordination, be ordained. (2) That those

¹ Something is here omitted in the M.S. to the effect of "*they proceed as they,*" before "*do.*"

who remain be not allowed to preach, but be set as inspectors over the societies, and assistants to them. (3) That they be not moved from place to place, to the end they may be personally acquainted with all the members of such societies. (4) That their business may be to purge and edify the societies under their care, to the end that no person be continued a member, whose conversation is not orderly and of good report.

I mention this only as an incomplete sketch, and the best thing I can see in your power to do, to promote usefulness on one side and to remove difficulties on the other. And if this should be made an objection, that hereby lay-preachers would be prevented from preaching abroad, and so much good put a stop to; I would suggest it to be inquired into, whether the many of these who have started up of their own heads, [being] considered raw, disqualified, and sadly misbehaved—many of them, by the by, after having publicly appeared—whether this considered, lay-preaching hath been so much to the honour or interest of religion or Methodism, as may be supposed? I remember when it first began, I said and thought lay-preaching would be the ruin of Methodism.

Whatever is done, Sir, I trust it will be to the furtherance of the Gospel. In which respect you will excuse my adding a brotherly caution; which is, that if you should come to a closer conformity with us, you be all careful to guard against worldly views and respects; that you dread the friendship of the world

more than ever, and endeavour to act, and conduct this affair especially in such a manner, as to convince an adulterous generation your aims are more than ever self-denying.

I pray God infinitely wise, to direct you, and am,

Your humble Servant,

Though unworthy Brother,

S. WALKER.

The following is a private letter to Mr. C. Wesley, inclosed in the foregoing. It will explain itself.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Vivian and I apprehend from the tenor of yours, you might not choose your brother should know you had written to me ; for which reason I have contrived mine to you in such a manner as to leave you at liberty to tell him it yourself, if you see fit. I have sent him a letter by the post, but should have been glad of a little longer time for digesting my thoughts on so important a matter. I thank you for yours heartily, and for the spirit wherewith it is written. As you will see by mine to Mr. Wesley, I have adopted as many of your sentiments as I thought his present circumstances would bear, reserving the fuller explanation of my mind to that other I write you, which you will communicate or not at your discretion. I thought this the most prudent way of putting it into your power, to make what use you should see fit of my little help. In one or the other

I have taken nearly all your scheme ; perhaps a little more ; but my rule is in such matters to declare myself *freely* and *fully*.

I will now add a word or two farther, which possibly you may not choose should appear in a letter of a more public nature. The archbishop is greatly to be commended for his labours after peace, and without question, if the measures are obtained which you desire, it will be very advisable he be waited on, and informed of them. But this must be done with fear, lest the leaders among you being taken notice of by such great ones, do abate of their zeal. Especially it would be capable of a very bad interpretation, should any of them be advanced to considerable preferment.

To my thinking, you will not gain much by getting the preachers to subscribe the agreement of *March* 10, 1752.¹ If things are left as they are, they will break out at last, nor can any thing less be expected at your brother's death, which is an event at no great distance in all human appearance. Or should he live, still the evil is unremoved.

I could wish there might be a reconsideration of that matter respecting *assurance*. I take it the way wherein your brother states faith, or the witness of the Spirit, to be unscriptural and unsafe. I have examined all he has said about it, but find no warrant of God's word whereon it is built ; especially I am not satisfied with the proofs produced in the *minutes*

¹ See Mr. C. Wesley's Letter.

of conversation &c. which seem to me directly to make against it. I do not quarrel at sensible feelings, they are proper in their place ; but faith and feeling appear to me direct opposites, and feeling alone cannot be the witness of the Spirit. I do not say, that people that make more of sensible feelings than I do, are not right, or suppose there may not be a true work under them ; but as the thing is stated, it seems to me dangerous and often uncomfortable. That we are justified by faith alone, or by the merits of Christ applied by faith, is as clear as the sun. But then what is that faith and the witness of the Spirit ? I wish this matter might be reconsidered. I think there are many ill consequences arising from this manner of stating it. I fancy, were this matter regulated, the Methodists would be more useful, and in their classes more benefited. Believe me, dear Sir, I say not this from a spirit of opposition ; but simply for the promoting the interests of true vital Christianity among the Methodists and by them.

I am yours, &c. S. W.

August 16, 1756.

P. S.—If something were said to the preachers respecting a proper ministerial call, might it be amiss at a fit time ?

Upon the receipt of these letters, Mr. Charles Wesley again wrote to Mr. Walker ; but his brother had not yet reached Bristol.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

Bristol, August 21st, 1756.

DEAR SIR,

Your last brings a blessing with it. I hope to consider it fully with my brother, who is expected every hour. I have not time to answer only in few words.

Lay-preaching, it must be allowed, is a partial separation, and may, but *need* not, end in a total one. The probability of it, has made me tremble for years past, and kept me from leaving the Methodists. I stay not so much to do good, as to prevent evil. I stand in the way of my brother's violent counsellors, the object of both their fear and hate.

The regulations you propose, are the same in substance which I have been long contending for in vain. God incline my brother's heart to admit them. I know he will not hear of laying aside his lay-preachers, in so many words. All I can desire of him to begin, is (1) To cut off all their hopes of his leaving the Church of England. (2) To put a stop to any more new preachers, till he has entirely regulated, disciplined, and secured the old ones. If he wavers still, and trims between the Church and them, I know not what to do. As yet it is in his power, if he exert himself, to stop the evil. But I fear he will never have another opportunity. The tide will be too strong for him, and bear him away into the gulph of separation. Must I not therefore enter my protest and give up the preachers formally, to him?

Hoc Ithacus velit, and they impatiently wait for it. The restless pains of bad men to thrust me out from the Methodists, seem a plain argument for my continuing with them. I want light, would have no will of my own, but prove what is that good and perfect will of God. In my next I may have time for a more particular answer. Be so good to write again ; and continue your prayers for,

Dear Sir,

Your sincere, though weak and despised brother,

C. WESLEY.

Mr. Walker thus acknowledged the last letter of Mr. Charles Wesley, and expressed his fears for the issue of the conference.

To the Rev. C. Wesley.

DEAR SIR,

I am favoured with yours of the 21st, and waiting with a good deal of concern for farther account of the issue of this conference. To say the truth, I have not much hope from it. I am fearful your brother will not exert himself as I wish he may. He is hindered by his own fears, which give the preachers an advantage they could not otherwise possibly have. He imagines more depends upon them than does, and so is apprehensive they will leave him, and the work come to the ground. I could wish he had resolution (shall I call it?) enough

to follow his conscience, and leave them to theirs, and suffer the one and the other to be guided by scripture. It is evident he is not easy in his own mind under the present irregularity, and so sees the necessity of either laying the preachers aside, or making them a separate church ; while also on the one hand, his conscience will not digest a separation, and on the other, he had too great a hand in setting them up, to think of pulling them down.

Your case, dear Sir, in such circumstances is peculiarly trying and interesting, nor is it easy for you to see the part you have to act. Yet I think, (and thank God for it) you have the main qualification, a single eye ; and I doubt not providence will open your way before you. Were this the case of those who have been in conference with you, the matter had been easily decided. But the perverting influence of party, self-conceit, reputation, honour, will be mixing, and as I suppose, hath now as formerly, rendered your meeting of little purpose. Indeed there is much to be undone one way and another, before you can be united ; especially the forwardness of an unhumiliated spirit among the preachers, who however highly they may think of themselves, are but poor judges of what they are called to confer upon, and will make a very sorry figure at the head of a separation, should they obtain it. I fear the meekness of wisdom is not among them ; if it were, they would know their place better and be subject. It has been a great fault all along, to have made the low people of your council ; and if there be not

power enough left in you brother's hands to do as he sees fit, they will soon shew him they will be their own masters.

There is but one plan I apprehend, on which matters of this nature can be adjusted. It may be set down as an axiom, *If it be not sinful to abide in a particular Church, it must be sinful to separate from it.* And if this be granted, it is not easy to be seen how a separation can be considered on the footing of expediency ; for to question if it be expedient to abide or to depart, is to ask if it be fit to do what is unlawful, or not to do what is a duty, seeing I ought to depart if it be sinful to abide. Evidently this is the whole of the matter. When people therefore betake themselves to consult if it be expedient to abide or depart, if by expediency they mean any thing more than lawfulness, they are but consulting whether they shall abide by duty or no, and setting themselves to determine what God has determined for them. In such a conference, the only determining rule being laid by, the reasonings of one will be set up against those of another, the particular aims of corrupt hearts have a loose given them, and nothing follow but heat, obstinacy, and alienation of heart and affections. Every one should consult his own conscience with much fear and prayer, and to prevent mistakes that might arise, all might confer upon the duty or sinfulness of abiding ; which done, such as are satisfied in conscience before God it is sinful to abide, should depart ; and they who judge it not sinful to abide, must remain.

If this plain method were followed, debate would be excluded and love maintained ; and withal every man's conscience would be easy. But though this be a plain method, yet it is not easy to pursue it, because of our own will and worldly respects, which will be exceeding apt to rise up and blind or bias the judgment, under the colour of bad or good consequences to be expected from this or that conduct. To leave the management of the house to the master, without apprehension he will suffer his interests to receive hurt, and simply to do what he bids us, enters into the heart of true faith.

I have said the more on this head, that if you have been driven to make certain declarations in consequence of the dictates of your own conscience, you may not be uneasy at having done so. For you will easily apprehend, if the rule I have laid down be right, and your preachers be not guided by it, there can be no manner of dependance upon them, because at bottom they do not make it a matter of conscience whether they shall abide or depart ; and so your conduct will have been a bearing witness for the truth, a leading the way to others of like simplicity, and a seasonable reproof of those whose will is their guide. In short, I would wish you to do what your conscience requires without respect to consequences, although I do not presume to direct what you should do. Consequences we know nothing of, nor have we any thing to do with. I have been thinking what good might be expected by a separation, in the judgment of those who press for it. I see many benefits

in prospect from the Methodists' closer union, and a thousand ill consequences from a separation ; but one good one cannot see, unless this be mistaken for one, that the preachers will then become ministers. I should wish to know what is designed by it ? To separate for the sake of separating is strange work ! To separate because it is sinful to abide is something ; but to be fishing for reasons to justify a separation, when one means nothing by that separation but to please one's self, or raise a party, this is strange work.

I shall be expecting to hear from you again in a post or two. Meantime, may the Lord strengthen and comfort your heart, and direct you, as I am sure he will do, into that which shall be most for his glory. Forget not how he has placed you in the gap.

Believe me,

Your sincere though very unworthy brother,

S. WALKER.

Mr. Walker sent copies of these letters to Mr. Adam, with the following from himself :—

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

September 2, 1756.

DEAR SIR,

You will find by the enclosed copies of letters that Mr. Wesley has been, and perhaps still is engaged in another conference with his lay-preachers.

The affair is become of a very serious nature, and beyond what I fear they will be able to manage. To my apprehension, it will end in a separation, unless these lay-preachers be laid aside ; which, however Charles may be disposed to do, neither his brother nor they will be disposed to. The usefulness of the Methodists will be over whenever they separate ; while also such an event will be apt to damp the zeal of the regular clergy who are standing up in the gap. I would needs have your sentiments on the matter, and how I ought to act if farther applied to, as also wherein I have blundered in what I have done already. For my own part, I see abundant cause of thankfulness that I have been directed to act in a regular way, as well as kept from their mistakes in doctrinals. *I am perfectly satisfied we are members of a pure Church of Christ.* I heartily desire to abide by it. I would exert my little endeavour to promote the ends of it. And surely it is among my chiefest joys, that God is raising up here and there, faithful men who speak and live the Gospel.

Yet it grieves me that the most of them, as far as I learn, are tinctured with unscriptural notions, ministering Gospel truths with a dash more or less of Methodism, Mysticism, or Moravianism. This at least gives a handle to such as are disposed themselves to do nothing, and will be glad to excuse themselves by picking holes. There is reason to suppose our friends in and near Bristol, united for the common cause, are not so clear and distinct in their manner of setting out Gospel truths, as we

would wish them. The correspondence I hold with one of them has given me opportunity (though very unfit for the purpose) of laying before them the substantial Gospel as I understand it. On my communicating it to my friends here, they wish it might be carefully corrected, and tell me it may be of more general service. Will you give yourself the trouble to consider it, and to make what corrections or enlargements you see needful; as well as to inform me whether you judge it may be a help to young clergymen, and if so, if it will be most useful by being handed to any such in manuscript.

Could I get time and help, I should gladly make a long journey, and even come the length of Winttingham. Such a journey would be useful to me every way: particularly I seem to need it with regard to my health, of which I cannot boast, although I have no more to complain of than a growing debility and consequent inability to labour as usual. This has engaged me to abridge myself in some lesser particulars; though the public Sunday duty seems now somewhat too hard upon me. I wish to be in submission to the divine will, and to wait on Providence for direction. But as far as I can see, the issue will be either labouring here till I can labour no more, or to remove hence if I may not get an assistant.

Your account of Lord Dartmouth and his Lady greatly delights me, and gives hope that piety may gain some ground among the great ones. If Dr. Patten succeeds, I shall have no doubt it will. Let but scripture speak from the pulpit, and immorality

will hide the head. You have seen that gentleman's apology, and answer to Heathcote. What do you think of them? Has he set scripture authority on its proper basis? To my judgment he is still a little beside the mark.

You ask if my sermons were printed in Ireland without my knowledge. What I know of the matter is from my friend Mr. Vivian of Cornwood, who tells us, when some soldiers were at Plymouth in their way from Ireland to America, many of them being *Swadlers* (or Methodists so called in Ireland) had copies of *The Christian*,¹ which they said were printed in Dublin, and given away to the amount of a thousand. Is Mr. Conon my father? I think I may say yes. I had little knowledge, and less practice of vital Christianity, till known to him. His manner struck me at first sight; and under God, I am more indebted to him than to the whole world beside. He is indeed an excellent Christian, bore with me while I was weak, and now stands by me in all my endeavours. He is indeed the father of the regular work of God in these parts.

I waited a post, if I might give you some account of issue of the conference at Bristol. But as I hear nothing, will delay no longer. Soon as I am informed what they have done, you shall know it. Meantime, believe me,

Your truly affectionate and obedient

Servant and Brother,

S. WALKER.

¹ Mr. Walker's little volume.

Mr. Adam lost no time in replying to these communications. The proposals contained in Mr. Walker's letter to Mr. C. Wesley, he could not approve.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

Sept. 21st. 1756.

DEAR SIR,

I write immediately to give you my sentiments on your late correspondence with the Wesleys; and if I differ from you forgive me, most dear Sirs, Walker, Conon, Vivian, and take all into love. Methodism, as to its external form, is such a deviation from the rule and constitution of the Church of England, that all attempts to render them consistent must be in vain. Lay-preaching is a manifest irregularity, would not be endured in any Christian society, and is given up by you. To salve this sore, you say, *let some of their lay-preachers be ordained*. But suppose they could, which I very much question, and would consent to it, which they cannot do without condemning themselves for what is past, to what end would they be ordained? That they might still go on to preach in fields, or private houses, and hold separate meetings? This would still be as great a breach upon the order of the Church as ever; a Church within a Church, or more plainly, a Church against itself; and perhaps attended with greater inconveniences than their present practice. The truth is, either they set out wrong, and must return wholly to the order of

the Establishment, so long as they will assume to be of it ; or, they have acted hitherto, by superior direction from the Spirit, and must not flinch from their leader. The latter they pretend to, have gone all along upon that supposition, and if I mistake not, it is what they will abide by. J. Wesley, will not, cannot give up the point of lay-preaching, it will be giving up all ; he must cry *peccavi*, and his heart will hold him a tug before he comes to that. But if he would, the generality of his followers will not ; the Spirit's call to the work is all in all with them, and where they think that is, they will make no reckoning of any farther ordination ; and indeed it would be a strange piece of work ; for consider, their preachers must offer themselves to be ordained with a view to act irregularly, and take authority from a Bishop to preach where they shall be lawfully appointed thereunto, with a full resolution to act point blank against the tenor of their commission, and preach where and how they please. I could say more, but so much for your first expedient.

2. The second is, *That those who remain (unordained) be not allowed to preach, but be set as inspectors over the societies, and assistants to them.*

Dear Sir, what societies ? Societies disunited from their proper minister ? And under what form, method or regulation ? Your disqualifying unordained persons from preaching to them, supposes that others may. Suppose such a society in your own parish, would you not look upon it with a suspicious eye, and think yourself obliged to remonstrate against

it, as in effect a separation, and an inlet to confusion?

3. *That they be not removed from place to place, to the end they may be personally acquainted with all the members of such societies.*

4. *That their business may be to purge and edify the societies under their care, to the end that no person be continued a member, whose conversation is not orderly and of good report.*

These directions are good, supposing such societies to exist conformably to the Church of England. Though I am a little at a loss to know whom you mean by *they* in No. 3. If unordained persons, how can they well be any where else, but in the place where they dwell and get their livelihood? If ordained, this would hardly become a constitution among them; it being a piece of art with them, not disowned by themselves, to be often changing hands lest their preachers should grow stale.

Upon the whole, my judgment is, that they have embarrassed themselves past recovery; and must either go on in their present from, or separate totally and openly. The latter, many think, would be more ingenuous than an underhand separation from the Church, (i. e.) from the external form and policy of it, as you rightly understand the matter, and still affirming themselves to be of it, which is only *protestatio contra factum*.

I am greatly concerned to hear you mentioning again your declining state of health, and growing unfitness for service. If a long journey is thought

proper, I shall rejoice to see you, and will meet you any where upon the road. I suppose you have no assistant, but by all means get one some way or other for a time. Please to let me know whether you are perpetual Curate of Truro in your own right, or Curate to another. I shall be glad to see what you have drawn up for your young clergymen, and in return I must desire your sincere and well weighed sentiments of my advice to Lord Dartmouth by letter since I wrote to you, that I may retract it upon better information, or persist in it if right. I love and long after father Conon, and Mr. Vivian; God bless you all, and enable you to stand in the gap. I forgot in my last to thank you for Mr. Williams. I think you must e'en let the Methodists alone; I do not see what help you can afford them consistently with their principles and your own. "Every plant &c." should make us tremble on one side and the other. I am obliged to you for communicating what you did to me, of the state of their affairs, and the share you had in them, and am with great esteem and affection,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Your unworthy Brother,

A.

In the interval between this exchange of letters, news arrived of the conclusion of the Bristol Conference, the issue of which, was unexpectedly favourable; but it was only a stoppage of the volcano's mouth with its own cinders, which rendered its eruption in after times, more violent and overwhelming. Mr. C.

Wesley gave the following account of its termination in writing on the subject to Mr. Walker.

Bristol, Sep. 6th, 1756.

DEAR SIR,

I waited till our conference was quite over, before I told you the happy issue of it. Between forty and fifty, or almost all our itinerant Preachers were present. I have talked largely with each, some of whom I had not known before so much as by name. Mr. Venn a clergyman, was with us the whole time. An extract of my brother's first account is as follows :

“ That, August 26, 1756, both the travelling and local preachers were called over, and all objections which had been, or were now made to any of them, were considered.

“ In the afternoon the rules of the society were read and considered one by one ; the phrase was altered in one or two places, and a new rule added.

“ We afterwards spoke largely of keeping united to the Church, and there was no dissenting voice, but all were knit together in one mind and one judgment.

“ The subject was resumed on the second and third days, and my brother and I ended the conference with a strong declaration of our resolution to live and die in the communion of the Church of England. We all unanimously agreed, that whilst it was lawful or possible to continue in it, it was unlawful for us to leave it.”

Since our last conference at Leeds, two or three

of our preachers of a froward unhumbled spirit, have left us. The rest (except two here and two in Ireland) are, I have good reason to believe, men of a single eye, and humble, teachable spirit. I hope shortly to get an opportunity of telling you my whole heart concerning lay-preachers.

Meantime, I think we have cause to be thankful that hitherto the Lord hath helped us. Satan I trust has done his worst. He has thrust sore at us, that we might fall, but the Lord was our helper. My brother seems farther from a separation than ever.

As to the means of effectually preventing one, you will permit me to speak my mind with all plainness ; and you will much oblige me by using the same freedom.

This morning, my brother set out for London to print a new edition of his Notes. He has also undertaken to write a treatise, to confirm the Methodists in the Church. Next Monday, I expect to set out for the north on the same errand. I should be glad of a few lines from you before my journey, and to know how the work prospers in your part of the vineyard. The awakening in this and in all places where the gospel comes, either through the Clergy or Methodists, increases. God is providing a people for some great end ; and the third part he will bring through the fire, and there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd.

Continue your prayers for, dear Sir,

Your weakest Brother,

C. WESLEY.

Mr. John Wesley did not omit to reply to the letter Mr. Walker addressed to him by desire of his brother, when he was coming to Bristol. His answer is very characteristic of the man, and is as follows.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I have no point in view but to promote, so far as I am able, vital, practical religion; by the grace of God to beget, preserve, and increase the life of God in the souls of men. On this single principle I have hitherto proceeded, and taken no step but in subserviency to it. With this view, when I found it absolutely necessary, for the continuance of the work of God which had begun in many souls (which their *regular pastors* generally used all possible means to destroy) I permitted several of their brethren, whom I believe God had called thereto and qualified for the work, to comfort, exhort, and instruct those who were athirst for God, or walked in the light of his countenance. But, as the persons so qualified were few, and those who wanted their assistance very many, it followed that more of these were obliged to travel continually from place to place; and this occasioned several regulations from time to time, which were chiefly made in conferences. So great a blessing has attended the labours of these preachers, that we have been more and more convinced every year of the more than lawfulness of our proceedings; and the in-

conveniences, most of which we foresaw from the very first, have been both fewer and smaller than were expected. Rarely two in one year, out of the whole number of preachers, have either separated themselves, or been rejected by us. A great majority have all along behaved as becometh the Gospel of Christ, and I am clearly persuaded, have nothing more in view than to “spend and be spent” for their brethren. But the question is, “How may those be settled on such a footing, as one would wish they might after my death?” It is a weighty point; it has taken up my thoughts for several years. But I know nothing yet. The steps I am now to take are plain. I see broad light shining upon them. But the other part of the prospect I cannot see. Clouds and darkness rest upon it. Your general advice on this head, “To follow my own conscience, without any regard to consequences, or prudence, so called,” is unquestionably right and it is a rule which I have closely followed for many years, and hope to follow to my life’s end. The first of your *particular* advices is, “To keep full in view the interests of Christ’s church in general, and of practical religion, not considering *the Church of England* or *the cause of Methodism*, but as subordinate thereto.” This advice I have peculiarly observed from the beginning, as well as at our last conference. You advise,—2. “To keep in view also the unlawfulness of a separation from the Church of England.” To that likewise I agree. It cannot be lawful to separate from it, unless it be unlawful to continue in it. You advise,—3. “Fully

to declare myself on that head, and to suffer no dispute concerning it." The very same thing I wrote to my brother from Ireland, and we have declared ourselves without reserve. Nor was there any at the conference otherwise minded. Those who would have aimed at dispute had left us before. 4. All our preachers, as well as ourselves, purpose to continue in the Church of England. Nor did they ever before so freely and explicitly declare themselves on that subject. Your last advice is, "That as many of our preachers as are fit for it, be ordained, and that the others be fixed to certain societies not as preachers, but readers and inspectors."—You oblige me by speaking your sentiments so freely: with the same plainness I will answer. So far as I know myself, I have no more concern for the reputation of Methodism or my own, than for the reputation of Prester John. I have the same point in view as when I set out, the promoting as I am able, vital, practical religion; and in all our discipline, I still aim at the work God has begun in so many souls. With this view, and this only, I permitted those whom I believed God had called thereto, to comfort, exhort, and instruct their brethren; and if that end can be better answered some other way, I shall subscribe to it without delay. But is that which you propose a better way? This should be coolly and calmly considered.—If I mistake not, there are now in the county of Cornwall about four and thirty of these little societies, part of whom now experience the love of God, part are more or less seeking it. Four

preachers, Peter Jaco, Thomas Johnson, W. Crabb, and William Allwood, design the ensuing year, partly to call other sinners to repentance, but chiefly, to feed and guide these few feeble sheep ; to forward them, as of the ability which God giveth, in vital practical religion. Now, suppose that we can effect that Peter Jaco and Thomas Johnson be ordained, and settled in the curacies of Burrian and St. Just ; and suppose W. Crabb and Allwood fix at Launceston and the Dock, as readers and exhorters ; will this answer the end which I have in view, so well as their travelling through the county ?—It will not answer so well, even with regard to these societies with whom Peter Jaco and Thomas Johnson have settled. Be their talents never so great, they will ere long grow dead themselves, and so will most of those that hear them. I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach myself and most of my congregation asleep, nor can I believe it was the will of our Lord that any congregation should have one teacher only. We have found by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of preachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another : no one whom I ever yet knew, has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation. But suppose this would answer the end with regard to these two societies, would it answer in those where [W. Crabb and] W. Allwood were settled as inspectors and readers ? First, who shall feed them with the milk of the word ? The ministers of their

parishes? Alas, they cannot, they neither know themselves, nor live, nor teach the gospel. These readers? Can, then, either they, or I, or you always find something to read to our congregations, which will be as exactly adapted to their wants, and as much blest to them as our preaching? And here is another difficulty still. What authority have I to forbid them doing what I believe God has called them to do? I apprehend, indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to his work. Yet, if one of those two were to be supposed wanting, I had rather want the outward than the inward call. I rejoice, that I am called to preach the Gospel, both by God and man; yet I acknowledge, I had rather the divine without the human, than the human without the divine call.—But waving this, and suppose these four societies to be better provided for than they were before, what becomes of the other thirty? Will they prosper as well, when they are left as sheep without a shepherd? The experiment has been tried again and again, and always with the same event. Even the strong in faith grew weak and faint; many of the weak made shipwreck of the faith; the awakened fell asleep; sinners changed for awhile, returned as a dog to the vomit, and so by our lack of service, many of the souls perish for whom Christ died. Now, had we willingly withdrawn our service from them by voluntarily settling in our place, what account of these could we have given to the great Shepherd of all our souls?

I cannot therefore see, how any of these four

preachers, or any other in like circumstances, can ever while they have health and strength, ordained or unordained, fix in one place, without a grievous wound to their own consciences, and damage to the general work of God. Yet I trust I am open to conviction; and your farther thoughts on this or any other subject, will be acceptable to your very affectionate brother and fellow labourer,

J. WESLEY.

Thus ends this extraordinary correspondence, in reading which, our admiration is divided between the ability and forbearance displayed in it.¹ The arguments used by Mr. Walker against separation from the church on the grounds of expediency and inefficient administration of its ordinances, are unanswerable. Though a cloud of appalling gloom invests the sanctuary and the dwelling place of every careless minister, it is not lawful to forsake the consecrated property of heaven, because of the negligence of its earthly keepers, with whom the master himself will have an awful reckoning. It has appeared how agitated the mind of Wesley was upon this point, and what danger he apprehended from the froward spirit of his preach-

¹ In his correspondence with Mr. Adam in 1755, Wesley's tone was not so gentle. He had a genuine respect for Mr. Walker's eminent usefulness, and perhaps felt he was not his equal in clear and powerful reasoning. He insinuated that Mr. Adam's prudence was *worldly*, and commends *irregularity*. Hence Mr. Walker might well call his letter "a strange one." See Westoby's Life of Adam.

ers. To a certain degree he kept all his life to the Bristol declaration, and would probably have been a stronger advocate for adherence to the Established Church, but for the cool reception of his address to the pious clergy in the year 1764. Of this, he himself was the chief cause, though perhaps unwittingly, for his heart was much warmer than his head was clear. How could he expect men determined to abide by the reformed discipline, to assent to a proposal scarcely intelligible, and which if it meant any thing, meant that they should help on the Methodists. He invited then to cooperate, it is true, without sacrifice of opinion, but proposed that the uniting parties should remain "quite regular, or quite irregular, or partly regular, and partly irregular!" What was this but a request that the clergymen he applied to, should countenance his whole scheme of lay-preaching, to which the most influential of them had objected only eight years before? Could he reasonably look for any such thing? The number of clergy to whom he appealed was thirty-four, and it has been frequently considered as a matter of surprise that three only took notice of his circular; whereas the wonder would have been if they had. That he was nettled at this there can be no doubt, for he exclaimed "they are a rope of sand, and such they will continue," and instantly set about perpetuating the union of his preachers. Here he proved that the power of compacting an associated body, was the point in which his strength lay. He prided himself on this talent, and not without reason. If in addi-

tion to his fervent spirit and gift of organization, he had possessed the clear intellect and logical mind of Mr. Walker, the Wesleyan body would have been as sound in doctrine as they are ingeniously—but not scripturally—combined by discipline. This correspondence and these few remarks are now laid before the public, with no unkind feeling towards the Methodists as a body. To tell them affectionately wherein we believe them to be wrong, is the best proof of Christian regard, and if ineffectual, ought as respects the motives, not to be unappreciated. Neither should they read such an account of the workings of their founder's mind, when first the great question of separation was bruited, without serious reflection. They have—some of them,—in their recent declarations in favor of the Church of England, proved themselves to have a high opinion of the value of that body whence they have been disjointed, and from which the severance was so made, that it is not impossible, perhaps, to re-ingraft them. It ought also to be our care to prove the expansive power of the Church, and its capability of receiving, invigorating, and rendering fruitful such an accession of scions. We must, however, reverse the order of the case in nature; the fruit must partake not of the properties of the ingrafted branches, but of the parent stem—not of Wesleyanism, but Church-membership. They have never formally professed *dissent*, whereby they are placed in a different position from that of nonconformists in general. But, though dissent has not been proclaimed by them, they are dissenters. They forsake our discipline and our

orders, while they have no objection to our episcopacy or our services ; and it may be, as Watson observes, “ there is a warmer regard towards the Church among the body of Methodists now, than there was in the days of Mr. Wesley.” In their teaching also, they are in a great degree at variance with our articles, which are far from sanctioning their views of faith, justification, imputed righteousness, perfection, and their notions of the power of the human will. Yet it must be admitted, that there are persons in connexion with our establishment far, very far, more at variance with the doctrines of the Reformers, than any Methodist in the land ; and as regards fundamental sentiments, it is to be feared more incurably, and, unquestionably, more dangerously tainted with error. A pious churchman seldom meets with an enlightened Wesleyan, without finding, like the late excellent Mr. Simeon and Wesley himself, that there are many more points of agreement between them, than of difference ; but a firm adherent to our own pandect of doctrine, can find nothing in common with those who introduce popish views of the sacraments within the pale of our altar, whence the Reformers used every effort to exclude them. Old fashioned *moral orthodoxy* is nearly extinct ; it is too tame an error for the times. But it has been replaced by certain new opinions, which are calculated to produce an intoxication, if possible, more detrimental than the lethargic effects of the former. The Wesleyans have certainly the credit of strict adherence to the views of their founder, and of retaining, with some exceptions, his respect

for the Church. The latter sentiment prevailed, we are told by Mr. Watson, "when it was in a lower religious state than it is at present; and its more recent religious improvement has not diminished the feeling." Churchmen are also called upon by him to reciprocate this feeling, and to endeavour to establish a stronger bond of friendship—and who does not wish to see a spirit of Christian love between all parties? As long, however, as the Methodists retain the peculiar doctrines before alluded to, the standard we subscribe renders all prospect of formal union a visionary scheme. Nor can the Church assent to their methods of applying the services of laymen.

But it is time to conclude this long chapter, and to pass on to the consideration of the effects of separation and lay-preaching in the next.

CHAPTER IX.

SEPARATION AND LAY PREACHING.

CAUSES OF SEPARATION.

THE Methodist¹ biographer of Wesley asserts, that the true causes of the separation of his followers from the church, have not been rightly stated. It has been often, he says, attributed in ignorance, or in a party spirit, to the ambition, intrigues, or schismatic inclination of the preachers; but he declares, that the real reasons were, that the clergy “*generally* did not preach the doctrines of their own church, and of the Reformation; and that *many* of them did not adorn their profession by their lives.” The early Wesleyans also found themselves persecuted and calumniated by a great number of clergymen, who regarded them as intruders, instead of welcome communicants, when they came to the table of the Lord. Hence arose a desire in the members of the Methodist

¹ Watson's Life of Wesley, p. 362.

societies, to receive the sacraments from their own preachers—a natural desire as far as *feeling* was concerned, but what is to be said of it in the way of sound *principle*? Such, it is avowed by those most likely to know, were the *true causes* of the separation of the Wesleyans from the Church, after the death of their chief, who in his latter days was even forced to a relaxation of his own rule, by giving the Lord's Supper himself, or obtaining clergymen to administer it in his chapels. It is freely admitted, that after his decease, the Conference—the very thing predicted by Mr. Walker—would not have had the power, if it had been so inclined, to have prevented this undue administration of the Sacraments. But we are given to understand—what an admission!—that “in the controversy which this subject excited, *speculative principles* had little part.”¹ The question was placed on practical grounds. Shall the societies be compelled from conscientious scruples to neglect the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or, shall they be driven to the dissenters, whose doctrines they do not believe? Both these alternatives were evils; it was argued, therefore, we will accede under certain regulations, to their desire to separate from the communion of the Church. This was considered a higher duty than adherence to old principles. Or, in other words, *expediency* was to overrule *principle*.

Such motives of action would throw the whole world into disorder. Wise, indeed, were those Me-

¹ Watson's Life of Wesley, p. 363.

thodists and preachers, for there were such, who were opposed to these concessions ; and wiser still were they who composed the small band of staunch, enlightened churchmen, which formed the nucleus of the increasing phalanx that defends and adorns our sanctuary at the present time. If the existence of a church is to depend upon the efficacy of its ministry at any particular juncture, what church on earth can hope to possess permanence, or the quality of securing the transmission from age to age, of sound unalterable doctrine ? To give an establishment the last-mentioned requisite, is surely one of the most important of ecclesiastical objects. At this our Reformers aimed, and have succeeded. The Church of England, unquestionably, possesses this characteristic of a true church. To leave her communion, therefore, because at any one time her ministers are dormant or inconsistent, is to leave truth in the hands of the negligent, and open to the aggressions of its foes. What have been the consequences of such proceedings ? Incalculable division among all classes of nonconformists, and perpetual splitting of the light of heaven into all the hues of the prism, instead of its concentration and purity. But it may be objected, that the church is also divided. It may be so ; but is there not a wide distinction between differences in a body with a correcting standard, and divisions without one ? In the former case, there is a daily hope of the restoration of unity from the tendency of a compacting force ; in the latter, every movement engenders a wider and wider separation.

Nothing appears to give more offence to the dissenting body, than even to hint that our establishment would have been in at least as good a condition as the present, if Wesley and Whitefield had not laboured as they did. Far be it from any Christian writer to detract from the reputation of these great and courageous champions of the gospel; but we have a right to a calm statement of facts, and to deduce our own consequences from fair, deliberate reasoning. It has been customary to attribute to these men and their coadjutors, not only the awakening of thousands, and an honoured instrumentality in the conversion of souls, but the revival of religion among the clergy. The history of the last century allows of no such conclusion. Nor is it true, that there were no churchmen associated in those days of darkness, for the purpose of spreading evangelical light. What was the object of the Clerical Club in Cornwall? With what ends did the diligent clergy correspond with each other? Still they who allow that some had consulted together with pure and holy motives, complain of the smallness of their sphere of operation, and contrast with it the wide field embraced by the more conspicuous revivalists. The clergy, we are told, were confined to their parishes, but the others visited large towns, conceived magnificent projects of spiritual adventure, went into the heart of manufacturing and commercial districts, universally infected with vice, scrupled not to descend into the very mines, and feared not to interrupt the most boisterous scenes of revelry, by the blast of the gospel-trumpet.

What, it is asked, were the puny doings of Walker, Adam, and such other individuals, when compared with these? The mind is easily dazzled by such statements; and if the whole progress of religious events, is not accurately traced and weighed, its decision will be naturally in favour of the *irregulars*. But they, who after careful investigation arrive at a different conclusion, ought not to be accused of invidious feelings, or of a desire never once entertained, to undervalue what is excellent in men whose career they cannot conscientiously approve, while they give them entire credit for the purest motives and for much usefulness.

The events which took place in the days of Mr. Walker, naturally lead the mind to the effects produced upon the Church by those who deviated from her discipline, and those who pursued an opposite course. Had the efforts of the former borne upon the definite object of arousing a careless priesthood and an irreligious people, by reminding them of their advantages, and calling on them to enjoy their own scriptural privileges, they would have undoubtedly conferred an incalculable blessing upon numerous churchmen, and the Church itself. But they adopted the contrary method of forming new bodies upon new plans, instead of recurring to the proved value of the ancient system. They invented fresh weapons, instead of burnishing and sharpening those of the old armoury, whose temper the corroding rust had no power to destroy, for they were framed upon the heavenly pattern. The immediate consequences of

this indiscreet zeal were separation, and the appearance of that spirit of insubordination which invariably attends it. Perpetual accounts of conversions were disfigured by the wildest enthusiasm, and the vain arrogance of schism. The press also sent forth pompous announcements of new chapels opened, of *ordinations*, of conferences, of wonderful awakenings, which conveyed an impression, that no good was doing in the land except by the new sectaries. These trumpeters of their own fame caught the public ear; but the prudent and devoted portion of the regular clergy went on working quietly and peacefully, in the hope of extending the bounds of our Zion gradually and securely, while they trembled at the wildness of the sincere but mistaken evangelists at large, if they may be so called. Had not the vision of these excited men been dazzled by the light of their own beacons, they would have seen that their very portraiture of their professed converts were mischievous caricatures. The history they themselves gave of their adventures, were absolutely satires upon their proceedings. Sober minds were alarmed; worldly men bitterly opposed. The latter, it is true, hated piety in any shape, but their hostility was not always *without a cause*. Neither Whitfield nor Wesley in their cooler age, approved proceedings sanctioned by them at first; such, for instance, as occurred at meetings prolonged through the entire night, wherein prudence, reason, and decorum were set at mournful defiance. The scenes of itinerancy displayed extravagances incredible and almost indescribable. It is a sickening retrospect,

when we read of wild roarings, fits, screams, biting the ground, construed into evidences of a Saviour's presence by his Holy Spirit, that divine and glorious agent, which renovates the soul by a powerful, yet gentle efficacy worthy of the gracious image of a dove, while it possesses all the melting force of fire, that the hard heart may be softened to receive the seal and image of Christ. Though these ecstasies may have been exaggerated, yet the records of some remain; and however much the admirers of Wesley may strive to palliate the stress laid by him on such emotions, it is undeniable that he wrote accounts of them, and numbered them with the proofs of his success. It would have been more consistent with the general tenor of his writings and the sobriety of his personal deportment, to have set his face at once against all such disgraceful exhibitions. That he did not, proves plainly that Mr. Walker's opinion of his mingled fervour of heart and weakness of mind was far from being incorrect. Watson allows that "cases of real enthusiasm"¹ did occur, and adds, "there are always nervous, dreary, and excitable people to be found, and the emotion which was produced among those who were really so 'pricked in the heart,' as to cry with a sincerity equal to that which was felt by those of old, 'What shall we do to be saved?' would often be communicated to such persons by natural sympathy." But he denies that Mr. Wesley encouraged these symptoms for their

¹ Life of Wesley, p. 94.

own sake, or taught the people to regard them as signs of grace. This might not have been his constant habit, nor is such a propensity apparent in his discourses; but why did he sit down and coolly write accounts of them to his friends, and include them in the enumeration of his evangelical adventures? Supposing, as his followers assert, that he merely narrated such circumstances as naked facts without remark, why, if he did not consider them as *proofs* of the divine favour, did he by his silence, give occasion to the world to form a contrary opinion? But let his own words be quoted in one instance among many. He represents that a Quaker attended one of his meetings to denounce the extravagances which were constantly taking place, but that he speedily became excited himself, bit his lips, knit his brows, and dropt down as if struck by lightning. “The agony he was in,” says Wesley, “was even terrible to behold; we besought God not to lay folly to his charge, and he soon lifted up his head and cried aloud, ‘*Now I know thou art a prophet of the Lord.*’”¹ These words need no comment; the inference intended is obvious enough. We rejoice that in his old age he neither looked for nor encouraged such paroxysms, though he would not contradict his early declarations, but attributed the exhibitions he then witnessed, to the divine goodness, as needful demonstrations of the validity of his mission. The Methodists say, that these signs were not pecu-

¹ Vid. Southey’s *Life of Wesley*, Vol. I. p. 248. London, 1820.

liar to the ministry of their founder, but that others produced them. It is true when Whitfield was at Bristol, preaching to an audience that had heard Wesley, and thereby had previous experience of the *outward signs*, like effects followed in four cases, and became a great triumph to Wesley. But there was a manifest difference in the stress laid upon them by the two men. Whitfield was far from being satisfied with his four excited hearers; and from his not even mentioning the circumstance in his journal, it is clear that he rather desired to forget than record it. It is certain also that his disciples invariably discountenanced such exhibitions.

But how did these occurrences affect the Church of England? They helped to introduce among the awakened ministers, as Mr. Walker stated in one of his letters, a mixture of doctrines any thing but in unison with the sobriety and orthodoxy of its standard. And how far these might have spread, but for the salutary check given them by a few staunch adherents to the good old principles, no man can possibly say. Nor can it be objected to the tenets of these steady excellent friends of order, that they are less spiritual and scriptural than those of their irregular cotemporaries. The writings of Walker and Adam are commended by all classes of serious Christians, at least equally with those of the other religious authors of their times. It is certain, moreover, that their views, and not the notions of the men who broke the ties of discipline, are now spreading over a great portion of the church, and will, it is

hoped, shortly enlighten and give stability to the entire body. The immediate consequences of irregular action and extravagant notions were, that many good men under a sudden impulse, ran forth from their ranks and brandished their weapons, doubtless with honest zeal, but without the discretion that must ever lead, while human instrumentality is exercised, to solid and lasting achievements. These well-meaning individuals—for all must honor their motives and admire their singleness of heart—caused perpetual accessions to the numbers of those whose watchword was ever *Separation*. Nay more, they did not scruple to minister to congregations severed from the church. This Grimshaw, Venn, Berridge, Pentycross and others did perpetually, for which reason their names are never mentioned but with high commendations by the dissenters. Churchmen also are willing to commend their piety ; nor let those who blame their imprudence, be unjustly accused of detracting from their worth. But how can the result of their exertions be considered as tending to ameliorate the condition of the vineyard from which they departed, leaving it to be trodden under foot by its enemies, or neglected by its legitimate defenders ? They acted upon the fallacious grounds of expediency, and drew fine distinctions between the doctrine and discipline of the Church, the latter of which they infringed upon the plea of spreading the former. But the cooler and wiser, and at the same time not less spiritual divines, saw plainly that discipline is itself a part of doctrine. If episcopacy, orders, and church

government are authorized by scripture, they are matters of doctrine as well as any other truths drawn from the same source, and till we can discover directions to the contrary, equally to be insisted on. The Bible enforces the propriety of compacting the body spiritual, as well as the duty of enlightening and edifying its several members. If the established system is composed of scriptural elements as respects both its doctrines and discipline, it could not be otherwise than lawful to abide by it, and therefore in principle unlawful to depart from it. To say then that the Church of England gained by such acts of irregularity, is altogether contrary to sound ratiocination.

But the history of the case proves that it lost by them. The results of almost every outbreak were the erection of a new place of worship, and the formation of a new society. Chapels rose on all sides. Their first supporters frequently became divided, and gave birth to new conventicles and new societies. Ministers were selected not to *teach* but to foster preconceived opinions, and in every instance of fresh secession, the breach between the separatists and the Church became wider and wider. Pious clergymen, as has been before stated, sanctioned these proceedings by their presence and ministry, whereby they unquestionably drew many to perpetual association with those bodies, of which they themselves were only occasional visitors. That such proceedings weakened their own community none can deny, for they drew off from it its most active friends. To assert then that

gain was the result, would be the same thing as to say that an army had been increased in discipline and strength, by the departure of its bravest and most active soldiers upon a guerilla warfare. This perhaps would for a time tend to harass the enemy, but not to ensure final decisive victory, or a prolonged tenure of what was gained by conquest. All irregular adventure must necessarily be marked by confusion and change. Its fortune depends not upon regulations but upon individuals, and fades when they cease from the field. System, on the contrary, prevents disorder, even when the men are feeble whose province is to bring it into action. Spiritual leaders of the last century gathered multitudes within capacious buildings, erected by the willing contributions of their followers, and these scenes of their exertions were often dignified with the evidences of true devotion, and rendered memorable by numerous conversions. But in many of those cases where no provision was made for lasting order, deserted places of worship and wandering congregations, proclaimed even more mournfully than customary exhibitions of funeral woe, the departure of the master spirits to their great account. When a successor was found to fill a vacancy, few reverted to the fold they had forsaken, while others were perpetually gathering from its deserted pastures, fresh accession to their flocks. Herein therefore the establishment has not been a gainer, but a loser. Notwithstanding this, there are yet many who conceive that these very events awakened in it a spirit of energy, partaking

perhaps in so small degree of apprehension of still farther injury. It is also imagined that it owes to this awakening, its present ameliorated condition and beneficial activity. That a general stir among all denominations, and a revival in the church were coincident, no one can deny ; still it does not follow that these were cause and effect. The fact is, as has already appeared in these pages, that two distinct sets of persons were at the same time employed upon the same object ; and the question is, which of these has produced permanent good in our national establishment ? Would it have been, in all human probability in the same languid inefficient condition which disgraced it seventy years ago, but for Wesley, Whitfield, and others of the same sort ; or has it been most usefully affected by the plans pursued by few zealous and diligent of its own members, whom providence raised up in their days ? It is not denied that the former quickened some within our pale ; but the point now inquired into is *permanency* of benefit. To resolve this inquiry we have only to follow a simple chain of events. Let us commence with the career of Walker, Adam, and others who were of like views with them. They adhered strictly to the forms of their own ritual, and manifested its power. While they did this, they were not slow to inquire after men willing to pursue a similar course, to whom they became both monitors and examples. Their spirit spread. Evangelical religion grew in the church, embellished it with its foliage and enriched it with its fruit. Its supporters were at once opposed, de-

clared enthusiasts, and unjustly branded as dissenters by the world ; yet their whole lives repelled the false insinuation. Inquiry after inquiry was instituted against them, but they generally triumphed in the favorable verdict of their ecclesiastical superiors, who could bring home to them no act of inconsistency or disobedience. Some of their lives are before the public, and in them we cannot recognize a single act of deviation from the discipline they vowed to maintain. Firm in their adherence to their own views, they were full of love to others, and knew how to rejoice in solid good by whatsoever agency it was brought to pass. It cannot be said that irregular ministers aroused them ; because they lamented their erratic habits, and their injudicious invitation of unstable and enthusiastic men to undertake the solemn office of the ministry, and were themselves, many of them, actively employed, before Methodism approached the spheres in which they moved. Compared with the entire body of their brethren, they were few in number, but scarcely a day passed without visible marks of the influence of that effective leaven, the tendency of which was gradually to pervade without convulsing the mass of society. They saw the impropriety of placing the ark upon "a new cart,"¹ because the priests came not forth to bear it upon their shoulders, and preferred waiting till its own spiritual guardians awoke to duty, to putting it under the conduct of any officious Uzzah that might imagine he had a right to uphold it. By degrees they in-

¹ 2 Sam. vi. 3.

creased in numbers, and have now augmented into a large and steady body, whose preaching, practice, and *order* may be well denominated *evangelical*. Some enrolled themselves amongst them, to whose career we cannot apply the epithet just named, though their doctrines may deserve it. Still, sound and active men began to rise up, one after another, who strictly adhered to the forms and discipline of the Establishment, until they became planted in every county of the kingdom. Their lamps were fixed in the legitimate sockets of their own parishes, but their beauteous flames were visible far and wide in the surrounding darkness, and the successive elevation of kindred lights has at length blest the nation with a glorious intensity of spiritual illumination. This state of things came on by degrees ; it is progressing still, and is far from being welcomed by such of our opponents as deny the usefulness, and look with a jealous, and perhaps a rapacious eye, on the possessions of our Establishment. There are, however, pious and honourable nonconformists, towards whom we ought to cherish every feeling of Christian kindness ; and let such calmly weigh the reasons of those who doubt the beneficial influence of the *irregulars* of the last century, upon the increase of vital piety in our Church. The present activity amongst the clergy is not owing to them, but to the example of the *regulars* who feared, and predicted the consequences of their intemperate zeal. Romaine, Biddulph, Simeon, Spencer,¹

¹ This excellent individual was the friend both of Wesley and Whitfield, but a strict churchman. I had the happiness to

with others who trod in the steps of Walker, Adam, and their associates, carried on the great work of reformation amongst us ; to whom, and not as we are perpetually told, to their more hasty, but well-meaning cotemporaries, is the honour thereof justly due. But for the force of their examples, the soundness of their reasoning, and their vivid exhibition of the value of the system of our Church, she would have fallen, and left behind her scarcely a fragment to indicate her ancient beauty and grandeur. The tempest of separation had its uses, but it was a tempest still ; and but for the *conductors* of our sanctuary, the lightning would have smitten the bulwarks of our constitution, and laid its stones in the dust. They will also be, by God's mercy, our safeguards in this present day of peril.

Many of the events lamented in the present narrative are attributable to an indiscreet introduction of lay-agency, which will ever be mischievous or useful, according to the mode of its application. Regular pastors have, unquestionably, a right to look for assistance from the enlightened laity, and will find it always desirable to impress upon them the necessity of manifesting an *active* concern for the cause of Christ. Laymen are not to be idle spectators of the

be his pupil in his old age. He was the means of leading many to Christ, in his school at Winkfield, in Wiltshire, who have since been diligent ministers of the Gospel. He always urged upon his pupils the most scrupulous adherence to established rules, with true canonical obedience to their ecclesiastical superiors.

onward course of the chariot of the gospel, but have their part to perform in preparing its way, yielding the reins to those who are ordained to hold them. Whenever they have taken upon themselves offices pertaining solely to their spiritual leaders, confusion has been the invariable result. A *ministry* is as clearly set forth in the New Testament, as a *priesthood* was in the old ; and to employ others in this work, is to place the portals of the sanctuary on the frail hinges of policy, instead of the sound ones of divinity. When Wesley viewed the indolence of the regular clergy, his zeal led him to employ laymen as preachers, and the consequence was an outbreak of enthusiasm and insubordination, he was unable to suppress. It is true that he commenced with caution. He could obtain no assistance from the Church in confirming the faith of his converts whom he had left to themselves, and therefore naturally asked, " what is to be done in a case of so extreme necessity when so many souls are at stake ? " He considered it expedient in this difficulty " to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God, and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm them as he was able in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation." At Kingwood, near Bristol, he appointed Cennick to this duty, and Thomas Maxfield, in London. " Both these persons," says Southey, " were men of great natural powers ; and though they ultimately both separated from him, they did honour to his discern-

ment, and never disgraced his choice." Had they been content to have remained where their leader placed them, they might have been useful to his cause, and comforts to his mind; but the temptation to take the easy step over the limits first assigned, was too strong to be resisted. Maxfield quickly began to preach; and the rumour of his irregularity brought Wesley up to London to stop it at once.

When he came to his mother's house, his countenance indicated anxiety and displeasure, and he answered her inquiries as to his manner and appearance, by telling her it arose from his having heard that Thomas Maxfield had turned preacher. "John," said she, looking at him earnestly, "take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are." She also assured him, that there was no natural disposition in her to favour such irregularities, but that her opinion was changed, and added, "examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself." He heard him, and in admiration of his eloquence, exclaimed, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." No doubt his heart was touched; yet there is some reason to believe that he saw it would be in vain to attempt to check the spirit which animated his followers, and that he had now better try to direct what he could not prevent. Thenceforth, he accordingly accepted the services of such as he thought fit to help him, as "sons in the gospel," but took care to stipulate that the scenes of their labour should

be selected by himself. Soon after Maxfield, the Yorkshire mason, John Nelson, began to preach in the same way ; and Wesley “ now fully acquiesced in the order of God, and rejoiced that the thoughts of God were not as his confused thoughts.” Having thus signified his approbation of lay-preaching, he entered fully into the spirit of it, and was himself accompanied, wherever he went, by one of his new helpers. Never had man more difficulties to encounter. He traversed mountains and fens, forests and wastes, setting fatigue, hunger and weather at defiance. He was equally unmoved by the violence of foes, and the coldness of professed friends. Zeal like his, whatever may have been his errors, must have been genuine. Nelson went with him into Cornwall, where he found many hearers, but the very reverse of the hospitality now so prevalent in that interesting county. It must have been a curious sight to have seen him and Nelson coming away from the multitudes that had listened to them, not one of whom offered their fatigued instructors the slightest particle of refreshment, but let their jaded horses find forage on the common, and their riders a dinner upon blackberries. On one of these occasions Wesley said with his characteristic calmness and resignation, “ Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries, for this is the best county I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst for getting food.” At night they slept upon cold floors, till the skin was worn off by the stones ; but Wesley advised his companion to be of good cheer as he was,

for said he, “ I have one whole side yet ; the skin is off but on one side.” He had, however, but a short time to bear such trials, for as his approach became known in after days, he found people contending for the honour of receiving such a guest, “ whose manners,” says Southey, “ were almost irresistibly winning, and whose cheerfulness was like a perpetual sunshine.” He went through all his difficulties with a willing, contented heart ; and whatever various opinions may be entertained of the propriety of his career, every pen that records his labours ought to do justice to his fervour and self-denial, even when honesty compels allusion to his infirmities.

No sooner, however, had this extraordinary man permitted the assistance of lay-preachers, than they crowded on him in swarms. He had no power to make a judicious selection, for it was evident that those whom he rejected would not be silenced, and then utter confusion must at once have ensued, and his schemes would have been fairly overturned. It is evident that he was exceedingly perplexed ; and the more so, because he could not obtain the concurrence of the clergy, which he courted in every possible way. He drew a distinction between his *permission* and *appointment* of the lay-preachers ; but, as was well inquired of him by a clerical correspondent, “ Where was the difference ? Under whose sanction did they act ? Was not their preaching a manifest breach upon the order of the Church, an inlet to confusion ? ” Wesley tried every kind of scheme, but none succeeded to his satisfaction.

His strange expedient of calling in Erasmus the Greek bishop, to ordain his preachers, brought upon him, and not without reason, the censures of his opponents, particularly of Toplady, who proclaimed the bishop “a vagrant” and “an impostor.” Indeed, it was doubtful, whether he was what he pretended to be. But to what inconsistencies may not any man be driven, by once giving way to the miserable excuse of *expediency*? His last act of all, however, was the most extraordinary. When he wanted ordained preachers for America, he, of a sudden, in his old age, found out by reading Lord King’s account of the Primitive Church, that bishops and presbyters are of the same order. This new and convenient discovery determined him to ordain Dr. Coke, who hesitated at first, but was overruled by the arguments that had weighed with his friend. He having consented, was invested with authority by Wesley, who actually gave him *letters of ordination*, to go out and ordain in America, stating in them, “I, John Wesley, *think* myself to be providentially called at this time, to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America.” *Therefore*, he sent out Dr. Coke, “a presbyter of the Church of England,” to preside over the flock of Christ! The plain answer to this presumptuous act seems never to have occurred to either Wesley or Coke—that if as they agreed, *presbyter* and *bishop* was the same order, the consecration was a useless ceremony; for the latter having been regularly ordained, was previously thereto as good a bishop as the former!

Into these and innumerable other difficulties was Wesley driven by his hasty adoption of lay-preaching, according to the predictions of those engaged in the correspondence given in the two last chapters. They who agreed with Messrs. Walker, Adam and others, have avoided these evils, and their opinions are now prevalent among the zealous clergy of the Church of England, and will, together with their clear announcement of her spiritual doctrines, ensure the usefulness and stability of our national religion. Men of great piety, however, acted differently. Fletcher and Berridge lent their horse-blocks,¹ Grimshaw his kitchen, and others their church-yards to the lay-preachers, and this without the least suspicion of the evils likely to ensue when such men multiplied in the land. Whatever the effects may have been in awakening some who were unconcerned about their souls, the labours of these persons have, as was foretold, been a great hindrance to the spread of sound vital principles, and to the prevalence of Christian unity. To say that the lay-preachers failed to reclaim any from vice and ignorance, would be unjust, but it is certain that they mingled with the seeds of truth those of misrule and confusion. In the congregations of the Wesleyans things proceed generally upon a regular system; but when principles have been put to the test, even amongst them, division has been the result. Look also at the body of men in the present day calling themselves *Primitive Methodists* or *Ranters*.

¹ See my "Life of Rowland Hill," third edition, p. 395.

They have spread widely over many parts of the kingdom, professing to revive the visible emotions and sensible feelings of the early days of Wesley; and though they unquestionably have been the means of alarming many profligate persons amongst the lower orders, they disfigure their worship with absurdities almost inconceivable. They have *Camp Meetings* and *Creeping Meetings*, and they indulge in roarings, bellowings, swoons, fits, accompanied with gestures and language that would be infinitely ridiculous were their buffoonery less profane. A description of their wild proceedings, the violence of their male preachers, and the frantic harangues of their women, would hardly be believed by the refined and educated classes of society, but it would not be easy to exaggerate in drawing the disgusting picture. These evils are the offspring of the hasty, indiscriminate sanction of lay-preaching; they are excrescences upon the old stem. Any person amongst them, having a *call*, whether educated or uneducated, male or female, claims a right to preach, while the consequences are such as may be expected; and but for the barrier presented by the regular clergy, and by the steadier nonconformists, the land would be overflowed with the dark and putrescent waters of the most awful fanaticism. From all these things we must learn wisdom. There is abundant scope in schools, in societies, in their own private spheres, for active and pious laymen;¹ but if once they are encouraged to assume a single

¹ See Proceedings of the excellent Pastoral Aid Society.

clerical function, or any thing bordering thereon, a few years experience will prove the danger of such a departure from the injunctions of scripture.

In order to give weight to the foregoing observations on Lay-Preaching, it will be necessary to prove that it is, as just asserted, contrary to the scriptures. No one will dispute that punishments were inflicted upon men under the Old Testament dispensation, who interfered with sacred things not appertaining to their station and calling. The striking cases of Saul, Uzzah, and Uzziah¹ are indisputable proofs of the divine displeasure, upon those who presumed to take to themselves services belonging solely to the priesthood. Nor had the unauthorized more right to teach than to sacrifice. "I have not sent these prophets," said the Lord by Jeremiah,² "yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied"—a passage in all its bearings well worthy of attentive consideration. When the priests were inactive, curses were denounced on them, but men were not allowed, according to their several fancies, to find substitutes for them. In the New Testament, St. Paul,³ when he inquires "how shall they hear without a preacher?" does not omit also to ask, "how shall they preach except they be *sent*?" The meaning of this passage evidently depends upon the right interpretation of the word translated *sent*,⁴ of which the etymology is so

¹ 1 Sam. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. vi. 7. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16.

² Jer. xxiii. 21.

³ Rom. x. 15.

⁴ Ἐὰν μὴ ἀποσταλῶσι.

clear, that it can hardly become the subject of dispute. It has a plain reference to the *apostolic* mission, without which none can be said to be Christ's officers. He himself thus *named*¹ those he first sent out upon the gospel errand. The matter therefore resolves itself into the question, what constitutes a preaching mission *apostolic*? The answer to this inquiry is two-fold—gifts from God—authority from the Church. It was in order previously to ascertain the possession of the first of these requisites, that Timothy was directed not lightly to communicate the second—"lay hands suddenly on no man."² When also the Holy Ghost called Barnabas and Saul to the work, a divine communication was made to the Church to lay hands on them, and thus to assert its authority.³ These two qualifications which have been declared essential to an apostolic mission, were in that case so distinctly required, that their necessity must be deemed undeniable. Whoever reads attentively the Ordination Service of the Church of England, will see that these are the principles upon which it is founded.

But it is only fair to examine some of those portions of the word of God, which are adduced as sanctioning lay-preaching, by such as are advocates for the *libertas prophetandi*. One is the expression of St. Paul where he speaks of the "gifts differing according to the grace that is given us," adding, "whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."⁴ But here he surely means

¹ Luke vi. 13.

² 1 Tim. v. 22.

³ Acts xiii. 2, 3.

⁴ Rom. xii. 6.

those who are ministers *by office* ; for if *ability* is the only guide, those who have ability might rule, and might administer the ordinances upon the same pretext. The word *gift* is so clearly used for the *office* itself, or *gifted calling* in the fourth chapter of the Ephesians, that its meaning cannot be doubted, and except we make St. Paul contradict himself, it must signify the same here. Another passage considered favourable to the practice of lay-preaching, is taken from the first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians¹ —“the manifestation of the Spirit is given to *every man* to profit withal.” Now, if this intends more than the private fraternal exhortation due from all Christians to each other, it is opposed, which it cannot be, to the precepts relating to a public ministry ; and if men were more desirous to perform the duties God requires of them as to themselves, their families, and dependants, there would not be in them such a wrong propensity to assume functions which do not appertain to them. But the advocates of lay-preaching may further ask, did not “they that were scattered abroad” by Saul at the time of Stephen’s martyrdom go “every where preaching the word?”² And certainly a superficial view of this fact, may seem greatly to favor the practice of preaching without authoritative mission. Yet more mature reflection, will shew that such an inference is untenable. These men appear to be of the number of those on whom the Holy Ghost fell on the day of Pentecost. “The

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 7.² Acts viii. 4 ; xi. 20.

hand of the Lord" also "was with them," to confirm their doctrine by miracles; ¹ therefore they who upon the strength of their example, would assume the right of preaching without an *ordinary* mission, must exhibit the same *extraordinary* gifts; for God never sends forth any men to do his public work without some testimony from himself, or those he has commissioned to confer it. The case also was quite different from ours. We have a church in order; at that period things were in disorder, and the people had no opportunity of being gathered to a church. Some learned divines still conceive that the fourteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians evidently authorises a private man, who is sufficiently qualified by gifts, to teach publicly. But the most accurate commentators are agreed that the prophesying here alluded to by St. Paul, and which he would they all possessed, was extraordinary, and not an ordinary standing gift to the church. Upon the whole then, the plain rule of Scripture is, that no man may *preach, except he be sent*—that a gospel order is to be preserved. Even the deacon, the lowest grade, is to be approved, ² for no man may call himself, or be a judge of his own sufficiency. Christ was a wonderful example as regards the assumption of ecclesiastical office, for he took none upon himself without a call, a solemn mission, and separation for his work. His apostles and disciples were also formally sent, and took care that other ministers should

¹ Acts v. 21.

² Acts vi. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 10.

be so too, while they admonished the people to take care *what they heard* and *whom they heard*. Hence, the declaration seems unanswerable, that lay-preaching is not only contrary to the usage and laws of the Church of England, but to the whole tenor and authority of scripture. As far also as the reason of the thing is concerned, it was well said by an eminent writer,¹ that “it were a great disreputation to religion, that all great and public things, and every artifice or profitable science should in all the societies of men be distinguished by professors, artists, and proper ministers, and only religion should lie in common, apt to be bruised by the hard hand of mechanics, and sullied by the ruder touch of undiscerning and undistinguished persons.”

After these remarks on lay-preaching, it may be necessary to observe that the Church of England by no means condemns or disannuls the orders of other denominations, but she naturally considers those the most appropriate which come nearest to the clear apostolic rule. Far be it from us, while we rejoice in our episcopacy and are prepared to stand up for it as a scriptural institution, to denounce or disfranchise other Protestant orthodox communions; but rather let us as in the days of Edward, Elizabeth, and James the First, draw the bonds of Christian amity closely around us. Instead of lamenting, like the writers of some recent Tracts, the non-existence of such a spirit in our Articles, let us rather rejoice in a silence

¹ Taylor.

so laudable and truly Christian. There is no surer sign of error than vehement denunciation, which is the foul breathing of an unhealthy body, instead of the sweetness of one that is pure within. If any thing be wanting, it is an extension of privilege to our ministers, and an enlargement of their field of action. Let a wider scope be given to our zealous clergy; let earnest prayers be offered up for their daily increase; let our towers multiply in every neglected corner of the land; let zeal, prudence, and love be inscribed on our banners and guide our actions,—then peace and order will adorn our Sion, and the gospel of Christ shed a lustre upon our own nation, which will be reflected from its refulgent surface to the remotest corners of the world.

CHAPTER X.

ILL - HEALTH OF MR. WALKER FROM OVER-EXERTION—PUBLICATION OF “THE CHRISTIAN”—HIS LABOURS AMONG THE SOLDIERS—THEIR LETTERS—SYMPTOMS OF BACKSLIDING—CORRESPONDENCE—CANONS 72 AND 73.

ILL-HEALTH OF MR. WALKER.

At the very time that Mr. Walker was engaged in corresponding with Mr. Adam and the Wesleys, on the important topics of separation and lay-preaching, he laboured under a debility from over-exertion, which would have incapacitated most men for such an effort. But his distant friends saw in his firm handwriting and luminous expression of his opinions, no sign of coming feebleness, nor did his flock at home experience any diminution of his pastoral care. He was, nevertheless, conscious in his own mind, that his bodily frame was giving way under the too heavy burdens he bore without murmuring, and he felt that he should have strength to support them but a

short time longer. In fact, it was a question with him, whether he ought, except from actual inability, to relax in any duty whatever. He inquired anxiously upon this subject from Mr. Adam, to whom he had previously mentioned his state of health. In a letter to him, dated Oct. 2, 1755, he says,—“ Your last most obliging favour renewed and augmented the concern of my heart, arising, I am confident, from an affectionate regard that your letter had remained so long unanswered. But I could not endure to write to you but a line or two ; and I have not in all this time been able to do more. My heart is so ready to be puffed up, that I have not time to give you an account of my circumstances, which nevertheless I must do, both that you may be satisfied it hath not been in my power to indulge the pleasure of literary correspondence with yourself and other valuable friends, as I earnestly wish to do ; and also that I may have your judgment upon a case that is the result of the whole. My stated business (besides the Sunday duty, prayers Wednesdays and Fridays, burials, baptisms and attendance upon the sick in a parish where there are 1600 souls) is Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays to talk with such as apply to me in private from six to ten in the evening ; Tuesday to attend the society, and Thursday, a lecture at Church in the evening ; Saturday, and as much of Friday as I can gain, is bestowed in preparing the Sunday’s sermon ; to all of which must be added what I may well call the care of the Church, that is of above a hundred people, who upon one account and another continually need my direc-

tion. You will not wonder if my strength proves unequal to this labour, and that I find myself debilitated, and under necessity of making my time yet shorter by lying more in bed than formerly. In short, Sir, what I go through seems evidently to be hastening my end, though there be no immediate danger. My friends call on me to spare myself, as they say, for the work's sake ; but I am not satisfied in the neglect of any *present* duty, whatever may be the consequence to myself, and have dropt nothing. If I do wrong herein, God knows I would gladly know his will in the matter, and beg your friendly sentiments, whether I ought not in conscience to persist in all such things as immediately require my assistance in the ministerial capacity, though I feel and foresee a growing decay by it? And whether I ought to have any regard to what the consequence may possibly be with respect to the work here, in case of my death? And, if I ought to drop any thing, what?" Those faithful ministers, who have experienced the trial of a threatened suspension of their parochial and other duties, from causes similar to those described by Mr. Walker, will best know how to appreciate the spirit in which he made these inquiries of his Wintringham fellow-labourer. The exact nature of the counsel given in the reply to this letter does not appear ; but it is certain, that he received very opposite advice from different quarters. Some were for his going on at all hazards ; others advised relaxation ; and well would it have been, to speak after the manner of men, if the last opinion had been taken. He pro-

ceeded in his unremitted occupations until, as it will be seen hereafter, his constitution was worn down beyond all possibility of repair. Yet in his death, he will be found to speak not less powerfully than in the excellence of his devoted life.

In addition to the various other employments occupying Mr. Walker's time, and overstraining his system, he had been engaged about the period last adverted to, in publishing a course of sermons delivered to his Truro congregation. The object he had in view in these discourses, was to give a scriptural delineation of the character of *The Christian*, which was accordingly made the title of the volume which contained them. "It is not," as he observes in his pious dedication to the inhabitants of Truro, "indeed a character which will suit the generality of those who call themselves by that name." He hoped, moreover, that it would cause some who had formed too favourable an opinion of their religious conduct, to feel a holy disgust with themselves. Vital Christianity was in his days, "either run down by the torrent of infidelity and licentiousness," or was "dwindling into a ceremonial form in the practice of the few who lived decently, and were well spoken of." It became, therefore, "the stewards of the mysteries of God to rise up to its rescue;" and the conviction of this important duty, at a period when the first glimmerings of true illumination began to chase the darkness of an awful night, engaged Mr. Walker to endeavour to present to the world in description, that which was but too rarely seen in the life. We can imagine him,

after the fatiguing routine of his daily ministrations, worn, pale, almost exhausted, every feeling of body and mind demanding repose, seated at this extra work with an energy in his manner and a zeal in his heart, which nothing but a love of souls could have inspired. Little does the world know of what the faithful minister feels in the retirement of his study, where the eternal interests of men form the subject of his solitary thoughts, silent devotions, and careful investigation of the pages of unerring truth. Deep at all times are the emotions of the careful steward of the heavenly mysteries ; but few can enter fully into those of Mr. Walker, at a time when almost every place in the land was under the shadow of death, and too many who had seen the first gentle breakings of the coming day, preferred following the false glare of their own imaginations, to waiting for the gradual diffusion of the sure light of truth. Like Wesley, he had determined to take a perpetual leave of leisure, until sickness restored its unwelcome companionship. Hence, in the midst of all his weariness, he undertook to print his *Christian* ; and the way in which it was received, more than repaid him for his pains.

A second edition soon became needful, and he applied to Mr. Adam for a recommendatory preface. On the 4th of November, 1755, he wrote to him—
 “ I have now to acquaint you that the present impression of my sermons being near sold off, order is given for a new one of five hundred copies. The good sale of them (as they tell me it is) gives me encou-

raging hopes that my little attempt may not be altogether fruitless. Your sentiments about them, while they are but too pleasing to my corrupt heart, serve not a little to strengthen that hope. And I heartily thank you for so free a communication of your thoughts, as well as for the pains you have used in making out inaccuracies. I should wonder if they were not many, the writer considered; and request you to refer me to them, that they may be corrected in the present edition. I am about to ask a great favour; which is, that if you shall see fit, you will write somewhat in the way of a preface or otherwise, to be prefixed to this edition, which I am persuaded will strengthen and recommend them. As they are now going to the press, and will not take more than six weeks in printing, this matter will admit of no delay." Mr. Adam complied with his friend's request, and sent him an excellent introductory essay;¹ he acknowledged the service done by this addition to the volume, in the following letter to one dear to him in the bonds of piety.

Dec. 16th, 1755.

DEAR WILLIAM,

Since you will have it so, I send you my letter to Mr. Browne,² which if you please (I mean

¹ It will be interesting also for the reader to know that these sermons were published many years after, with an introduction by Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge.

² The worthy young Clergyman before-mentioned.

as far as the scheme¹ goes) I shall be glad [if] you will transcribe, but send to no one till the whole be finished. You may do well to make him some apology on my behalf, for writing so freely and abruptly in a first letter.

I have a letter from Mr. Johnson, but shall not be able I believe to answer it till after Christmas, because of many engagements. I send you back his letters to all [of] you, as his to me gives me light enough. He is exceedingly honest. I love him much, and will gladly try to serve him.

Dear Mr. Adam hath sent me a most judicious, smart, and explicatory preface to my sermons, which will greatly assist them. Would God such a man were among these young fellows! But he is a *rara avis*.

We have continually letters from T. and G. which give us a good deal of content. They are in a barren land, and will need your prayers. Poor young men, it is well for them they are together, and especially for your favourite that George is with him. Nothing [can be] more providential, he is so suited [to him;] I know no other so fit for him. They are lovely youths. I have the greatest hopes for them. If they stand their ground, they will be both diligent and useful. They have both their temptations, and both their excellences. Tom will be in danger of over-rashness, and George of over-caution. George will make the greater figure, and Tom will be the

¹ One of the schemes, I presume, of private instruction which have already been given in these pages.

most liked. Should they be associates in a cure, nothing would be more desirable. Well, you never forget them. Their well doing is a matter of great importance to the world, for I am either so fond or so foolish as to think they have not many equals.

Remember me in the most affectionate manner to the dear little Doctor, and the young ladies with yourself; and all with you that belong to Christ, are near the heart of

Yours,

S. W.

The youths mentioned in this letter, by the familiar appellations of *Tom* and *George*, were destined afterwards, as their friend with his usual perspicacity foretold, to be able and zealous ministers of Christ. The first was afterwards Dr. Haweis, the well known chaplain of Lady Huntingdon; and the second, Mr. George Burnet, became an eminent clergyman, and assisted the excellent Mr. Venn in his labours at Huddersfield, who gives the following decided testimony to his valuable services in a letter to Lord Dartmouth: "I am greatly relieved and comforted by the presence and help of my dear fellow labourer in the kingdom and patience of Christ, Mr. Burnet; a man made to reprove the lightness of my mind, quick to discern, and bold to admonish, of unseemly carriage, yet with such unaffected humility and visible tenderness, as to make his reproofs like a polished shaft. I have great reason to adore that Providence which has brought us together, and if I do not pervert the grace of God,

his joining me will further much the prosperity of my soul." "The dear little Doctor" was a young gentleman of piety, on whom his pastor had bestowed the title, in that innocently playful spirit which gives the freshness of a summer's breeze to the path of children of the day.

Overburdened as this good man was by his various employments, he yet willingly entered on a new and important field of labour which presented itself to him at the close of the year 1756. A body of soldiers were sent into his parish for winter quarters, and though his physical powers were in a great degree unequal to the additional task, he at once made them the objects of his pastoral solicitude. He soon communicated the result of his labours among them to his good friend at Wintringham, to whom he sent the following interesting account of the reception he met with from his new hearers.

"The beginning of November three companies of soldiers were sent hither to winter. I endeavoured to lose no time with them, but without delay preached a sermon extraordinary on their account the Sunday afternoon, called by the people here, *The Soldiers' Sermon*. There was great difficulty to get their attendance to hear it. For though they be ordered to be at church in the morning, and are brought thither by their officers, yet their manner has been to take off at the door. In this point I was helped by the zeal of my dear people of the society, who made it their business to speak to these poor creatures, giving them such advice as they were able, and prevailing with

a few of them to be at church as was wished. They soon became a large number, and our labours were so blessed to them and us, that in less than three weeks, a full hundred of them came to my house, asking what they must do. This was what I aimed at,—an opportunity of personal and free application. The effects have been very striking. One or two only of the whole excepted, you would have seen their countenances changing, tears often bursting from their eyes, and confessions of their exceeding sinfulness and danger, breaking from their mouths. I have scarcely heard such a thing as self-excusing from one of them ; while their desire to be instructed, and uncommon thankfulness for any pains used on them by any of us, have been very remarkable. Such promising symptoms gave me great confidence it would come to something ; and more so when I found that many of them were stirred up to pray. Many of them, as was expected, soon went back. Nevertheless, thus far, both they and the others who never came near me, are plainly influenced, that a certain fear has restrained them from swearing and cursing, which, when they came hither, was universally their practice, has engaged them to attend public worship, and at least so far biassed their conduct, that military punishments are grown much less frequent among them. They are about twenty who have kept close to the means, and concerning whom I have encouraging hope, that a good work is begun in them. Indeed conviction of sin appears to have gone deep with them, and they are crying after Christ with such

marks of godly sorrow, as make me hope it is indeed repentance unto salvation. These I intend shall be united when they leave us under the name of *The Soldiers' Society*, having already drawn up regulations for that purpose. While here, they make part of our society, by which means, as well as by meetings I particularly give them for their use, they seem much established. What such a society may produce amongst the soldiers, God only knows. Yet I will comfort myself with the hope it may please the Lord the work may go farther. It may be observed that seven of these, viz. six Scotchmen, and one English dissenter have enjoyed the benefit of religious knowledge in their youth. The rest I find totally ignorant of every thing relating to Christ, which has made me lament the superficial use or total neglect of catechising among us, by which, more than by any other thing, I am persuaded the kingdom of darkness and sin is established in England.”¹

Mr. Walker's exertions in the regiment at first met with great opposition. The captain publicly forbade his men to go to him for private instruction, though no less, at last, than two hundred and fifty of them sought the “over-tired” but persevering servant of Christ for that purpose. Those also whom religion had separated from the sinful habits and company of their unawakened comrades, were much derided, but grace enabled them to stand. A great alteration, however soon took place. Punishments diminished and

¹ This letter is printed from the original MS. which I have in my possession.

order prevailed in the regiment, to a degree never before witnessed, and the commander at length discovered the excellent cause of this salutary change. Genuine zeal had now its full triumph and its rich reward. The officers waited on Mr. Walker in a body, to acknowledge the good effects of his wise and sedulous exertions, and to thank him for the reformation he had produced in their ranks.

These interesting men left Truro after nine weeks' stay. The parting scene was indescribably affecting. They assembled the last evening in the society's room, to hear their beloved minister's farewell prayer and exhortation. "Had you," said Mr. Walker to a friend, "but seen their countenances, what thankfulness, love, sorrow, and joy, sat upon them;—they hoped they might bring forth some fruit; they hoped to meet us again at the right hand of Jesus in his illustrious day. Amen." It was an hour of mingled distress and comfort: the hearts of some were so full, that they clasped the hand of the beloved instrument of their conversion, and turned away without a word. They began their morning's march praising God for bringing them under the sound of his gospel; and as they slowly passed along, turned round to catch occasional glimpses of the town as it gradually receded from their sight, exclaiming, "God bless Truro." They saw their spiritual leader no more on earth, but were consoled by the hope of a triumphant meeting in the armies of heaven.

Two letters were preserved by Mr. Walker, as precious memorials of this labour of love. The first

was written by a man who, when he came to Truro, "knew little more of Christ," to use his minister's expression, "than if he had lived in China." It shall be given in all its genuine simplicity, without any correction to destroy its interest.

Dated at Dock, January 17th, 1757.

DR. FATHER IN THE LORD,

Since I left you, I have had great trials, and is likely to have daily. But still I trust to Christ for to enable me to withstand them all ; for on our march here, each day religion was thrown in my teeth by calling me Methodist, and saying that I had made confession of all my sins to Mr. Walker. I made answer, and said they might say what they pleased, but the day would come when they must confess to a greater than he, that is the Lord Jesus, in whom I trust for help to withstand all the temptations of the devil, the flesh, and this wicked world, which I have to war against. But Christ has promised to assist them that trust in him for aid, which is my great comfort, for I always pray to him, and hold him in view as my Saviour and Redeemer. And I hope the God of all glory will be always with me, to enable me to fight on my good fight to salvation, and when the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come, I may be found acceptable in his sight, and be received into that heavenly kingdom which is purchased for me by the blood of Christ, and all poor condemned sinners ; me the worst of all, deserving nothing but damnation and the heavy wrath of God

for offending him, and breaking his commands, and making his sabbath a day of sport and drunkenness. Yet for all my great offences, transgression, and sin, I do sincerely believe that Christ's righteousness is able to save me and nothing else, by still applying to him, and praying to him as a poor miserable condemned sinner, hoping he will wash away my sins through his blood, and by giving me a new heart, I may be made a child of God through Christ Jesus. Amen.

I find my heart inclined greatly to the ways of the Lord, and ready to obey his commands ; but when I left you I was under some dread of falling, but I find the contrary, thanks be to God. And although my parting was sorrowful, yet I hope we shall meet again with joy in the kingdom of heaven, never more to be parted, but to sit together singing praise to God and the Lamb, for ever and for ever, Amen. And may the God of all glory bless you, and all my dear brethren, now and for ever, for, under God, you was the means of bring me to salvation. I desire your prayers always, as mine is for you night and morning, weak as they are. Pray remember me to all my dear brethren. Let Mr. Burnet know I had the book he sent me, and I return him thanks. Pray remember me to Mr. Rusel and Mrs. Rusel, and I pray God reward them, and my prayers is never wanting for them. I write to Mrs. Roberts the same time, and my wife likewise. I hope in my next you shall have the news that we are met in our little society together. All my dear brethren desires to be remembered to you, and all these brethren in the Lord. John

Roberts and I is comarads in the Barick. Derect to Henry Robinson, Granadeer in Colonol Anstruther's reg. of foot, in the upper baricks number 11. So I conclude, being all from your affecnate child in the Lord,

HENRY ROBINSON.

Excuse all I have said amiss, being wrote at a barick table with 14 men.

The Rev. Mr. Walker,
Minister in Truro,
Cornwall.

The second of these letters was addressed to a member of the Truro Society, and the names of two of the soldiers, seemingly men of tolerable education, are appended to it.

MY DEAR FRIEND IN THE LORD,

When I consider the value you put upon me, one of the unworthiest of God's sinful creatures, I cannot but be ashamed and lie low in the dust; and especially the more, when I consider what a regard you had, and have for the salvation of my precious and never-dying soul, and that when I seemed to have but very little concern for it myself. I cannot but be under the ties of gratitude to you, and especially to worthy Mr. Walker, all my life long, for having such a concern for such as I am. My sudden removal is no small heart-break to me, and that because I did not employ my time better than I

did when I had the means, which now the Lord in his providence hath been pleased to deprive me of. I confess that it was rightly done that the Lord should remove me, and all those who are like to me, unto a remote corner of darkness, because I was not more mindful of that which belonged to my everlasting peace ; but now I may say it is in a manner hid from mine eyes. I am much obliged to you for your encouraging [me] to bestir myself, in a life of universal usefulness among my brethren soldiers, and you may be assured whatever lies in my power to do, I shall most willingly and heartily do it under God ; but alas it is the fewest who seem to have any concern for their souls' salvation amongst us, and my speaking to them must be in vain. I judge no man : many would desire to die the death of the righteous, that would not desire to live their life, and [I] know that has been my case. Serjeant Moore for ever blesses the day that ever he saw Truro, and we both hope in the Almighty God to see it again, and to hear the glad tidings of salvation as formerly. But if it hath pleased God that we should not see it again, we trust in the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the seed sown there by the faithful servant of our Lord, shall not be as water spilt on the ground ; and althought it seems just now to lie under clouds and storms, that one day or other the Sun of righteousness will be pleased to shine on it [by] little, and little, till he brings it to the powerful day. For ever blessed be [God] that you was a means appointed to bring me to Mr. Walker, Mr. Painter bringing me

[to you], for which I did not really love you at first, because such a life was entirely against my sinful and wicked nature, and we may both say it was good for us to be here, that the Lord was in it and we did not know it, for we may say that with you we had a Saviour, and a pardon, and eternal life preached in the name of Jesus. And surely if we do not accept of it, mercy shall not excuse us, because it did take pity on us, if we did but forsake sin ; I mean in sparing us and bringing us to a place where we had so much conviction of our sins and misery ; but I hope that we may have it to say that there is a balm in Truro, and a physician there. Therefore it must be all our own faults if we perish, for we indeed own and acknowledge that we had the way of God expounded to us plainly. I would advise my brethren soldiers¹ that are with you not to neglect the means as I did, especially those who seem to have any concern for their souls ; for if they do they may come to repent it, as I am just doing now. In case we are to stay here, I shall, if possible, God willing, see you in a short time ; [if not,] you may be assured it is not for want of a good will, but for want of opportunity. Therefore, being in haste, I conclude, and so does Serjeant Moore, with our kind compliments to worthy Mr. Walker, our father in the Lord, not forgetting you and all the rest of our brethren that shall humble themselves so far as to [inquire] [after]

¹ A detachment that came into Truro on the same day the first party left, with whom Mr. Walker and his good people were equally diligent during their short stay.

us. We wish [well for] all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and they are in the prayers of us who are

Yours, with esteem and regard,

JOHN MURD,

and

ROBERT MOORE.

These simple expressions of gratitude and Christian affection gave real joy to Mr. Walker, and will be read with pleasure by all who know the happiness arising from the consciousness of having been honoured of God, by *such seals* to their labours of love.

The good minister of Truro experienced the pain that every one in like circumstances is called to suffer, from constant backslidings, not only amongst the soldiers, but in all descriptions of men who had under his guidance commenced a course of religion. In him, however, every emotion, whether joyous or grievous, was productive of some valuable result; the scorching fire of trial and the refreshing dew of the divine blessing, seemed equally to fertilize his well cultivated mind. The fruit of his sorrow, under the frequent declensions he was called to witness, was a most valuable help to the discovery of symptoms of drawing back in the various stages of spiritual progress. He divided the Christian life into three distinct stages, *Infancy*, *Youth*, and *Manhood*, and depicted the forerunners of decline in each, that the awful danger might be detected and avoided.

SYMPTOMS OF BACKSLIDING AND THEIR REMEDIES,
IN THE THREE DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE CHRIS-
TIAN LIFE, AS POINTED OUT BY MR. WALKER.

“First. In its state of *Infancy*, when the eyes are first opened to a serious view of the importance of religion, and to an unwonted solicitude about salvation; when the terms of wrath are discovered, and the soul is humbled with such a sense of its vileness, as to come (in the Scripture expression) in dust and ashes before God, crying to him for pardon, and resolving upon an entire change of life. Such a scene as this all persons must experience, though not all in the same degree, except those few happy people who, through the care of pious parents, may be said to have been born again from their cradles, and to have been brought to a hatred of sin, and flying from it in their tender years, and who withal have never fallen into any indifferent or wicked course afterwards. Your safety is in a growing conviction of your sin and vileness in such a state of infancy. I would desire you particularly to consider therefore, whether you find your sorrows and uneasiness lessening, before your sins are subdued and heart changed? Whilst temptations plead strongly with you, your grief and dread are your only security. Whilst you are truly humbled and afflicted, you may be tempted, as no doubt you will; you may fall, too, in some measure, though not as formerly; but whilst the sense of sin oppresses you, you will be as safe as people in so dan-

gerous a situation can be. But if your fear and trembling begin to wear off, when yet you are not a match for your trials, you are not far from falling back. Your sorrow being removed, your care will proportionably lessen, and your calls for grace and pardon will be still weaker, till you give up the whole pretence you had to a religious life; your views of eternity will fade, your resolutions languish, and you will quickly run with your old and a worse insensibility, to the company of the former partners of your sins. Now if the sense of guilt must be kept alive till the custom of sin be worn out, it will be no difficult matter to preserve such an afflicting persuasion of your present state, of the eternal fire before you, and of the glorious heaven you have now become a candidate for. Think of the dying hour, and the sick bed, and that you know not how near the one and the other may be to you; think that the present call of God's grace may be to prepare you for them; think of God as your Creator and Lord, your Redeemer and Judge; think of him as having no pleasure in you. Should you fall away, think of your past life with all attention, and call up the blackest circumstances of it, the days and years you have spent denying God, and ruining your perishing soul; let your thoughts be much upon this, and never imagine you have discovered enough of your iniquities, for indeed you have not discovered the smallest part of them. And to all these your constant thoughts, add as earnest and as frequent prayers to God as you can, and avoid all other but sober and religious conversation. Do this,

and you shall not need fear but the sorrows of your heart shall be enlarged, till God shall deliver you out of your sins and your troubles together.

Secondly. Religion in an advanced state is, at a time of youth, wherein men are, in a good degree, set at liberty from the power of their sins, and are free and active to bestir themselves, in gaining a more complete victory from day to day over their hidden iniquities,—a state in which we may adventure with some degree of boldness to resist unavoidable temptations, whereas before we must fly from them for safety ;—a state in which sin having been avoided for a good season, it is notoriously not only unpractised but really hated and abhorred, and we begin to look upon it with an indifference we were before unacquainted with ;—[a state] wherein we can hear or see the follies and vanities, which formerly engrossed all our souls, with dislike rather than with indifference, and very coldly pass by the doors where our old sins dwelt, without having any secret temptation or desire to enter into them ;—a state, in a word, wherein we begin to taste the reasonable, peaceful comforts of our freedom, and find our pursuits and prospects directing all our conversation towards spiritual and heavenly things, being renewed in the temper of our souls. Now in this more advanced state, I suppose we may find the distressing terrors of guilt removed, and that our hopes have prevailed over our fears ; and I suppose likewise that in a while, the violent spring which the soul took in the new satisfactions and gratifications it is now become [more] acquainted with,

may by degrees grow weaker, and in the mean time the sensible comforts of godliness may improve themselves into more gentle, but more reasonable ones. And here, when we are neither so greatly terrified on the one hand, nor so highly transported on the other, but our passions seem to be settled and cooled, so that we may with more attention make use of the victory God hath given us, the danger is, lest finding ourselves neither driven by terror nor hurried by joy, we grow indeed indifferent and tired of a religion which is not enough sensible. Would you know the first symptom, which, if suffered to possess you, benumbs all your holiness, and causes you to draw back with hasty steps to a heedless, if not an abandoned state, your private duties will give you notice of the growing indifference. If you find that you are not only cold, but careless about them, that you can leave them for a time without much contention about them; if, when you set about them, you discover yourselves secretly wishing they were ended, and that you do not put forth all your strength when you meet God in those chosen seasons—then you may be assured that you are drawing back. The hours of devotion being thus abated, your godliness having nothing to feed upon, your sense of God and of your duty will decline. Sin will no longer appear so very odious; you will see yourselves for a while like dead men, inactive and void of life; serious meditation will be a stranger; you will no longer meet God in your walks, nor be inclined to converse about him with your chosen friends. Perhaps you may be soon tempted to think

you have been labouring for nothing, or that holiness needs not so much care and thought as you have laid out upon it. When you are come to this, you are not far from destruction. Be convinced that you must soon fall into a carnal, or what is more dangerous, a formal state ; a kind of middle way between heaven and earth, just doing no ill, nor any good, a fearful sleep of conscience and of holiness with it. The first symptom by which you may infallibly discover this too frequent state of indifference is, I say, heedlessness or the neglect of your secret devotion. Then it will behove you to take the alarm, to set before you how the soul of God will have no pleasure in you, if you are neither hot nor cold ; and how intolerable must this thought be to you, to bethink you that to serve God as you are now likely to do, is to hide your talent in the earth, and to expect nothing for so poor a service, but the slothful and unprofitable servant's wages ; to bethink you that the service even of angels is unworthy of God, and how much more the imperfect service of man, when his whole heart and soul are buried in it. [In this state] you must mortify your body, and remove the weight it casts upon the soul, by abstinence and fasting in a religious and solemn manner ; you must be more particularly attentive to the word of God, and above all things force upon yourselves, however unwilling, the exercises of public and private devotion. If you can give yourselves leave to neglect these, you are entirely lost ; you are drawn back, and God's soul will have no pleasure in you. This now is the great symptom

of a declining state in the second stage of godliness ; and indeed in any stage of it, it is highly to be feared, and the more so in the manhood of religion, or the last stage of holiness, if such declensions may be thought consistent therewith—but

Thirdly. This last degree of religion hath symptoms of drawing back, which are more peculiar to itself, as well as the two other former ones. Now this last stage is a state, wherein having obtained confirmed freedom from the dominion of sin, we have all imaginable leisure and strength to contend against the remainder of sin dwelling in us, and to improve our graces with a fervent zeal both towards God and towards man. You will observe that when we are arrived hereto, it is very plain that we cannot form any judgment of drawing back, by attending to our not falling into gross and wilful sins : for these we are freed from. Should any one conceive that he was improving in the love of God and of man, in humility, patience, and heavenly-mindedness, because he was neither a drunkard, nor a cheat, nor a fornicator, he must needs deceive himself by so strange a conclusion. Nor again, can we determine our drawing back or not, by any outward practices or exercises of religion : these we have discharged, it may be, with an equal diligence for many years, and it is not in any neglect of these, that the first symptoms of drawing back will appear in the advanced Christian. But the proper employment of one arrived at this manhood in holiness, is to improve in his graces, and to root out the remainder of sin dwelling in his heart. Where-

fore, if a man be the advanced Christian he takes himself to be, he will perfectly know the state of his soul—will know what graces are imperfect, and what sins are still dwelling in him. These always will be found to act directly in opposition one to the other, so that the degree of imperfection in any grace, is discoverable by the remains of the opposite sin prevailing in us. For instance, just so much as I am defective in humility, exactly so much I have of pride; just so much as I am under the influence of anger, to that very degree I want patience; exactly in proportion as I love this world too much, in the same measure I love the other too little. Suppose now, in this advanced state, you would discover the first symptom of drawing back, set before you with constant and great attention, that remainder of sin which does most prevail against you. I make no question you are perfectly acquainted with what it is: you know if you are most prone to pride, or envy, or self-will, or the too great opinion of the world. For example, let us imagine it to be anger that is most prevailing with you; keep yourselves very attentive to the power it hath over you. Do you find yourselves to bear rebukes, and insults, and mockeries, yet with more calmness; or do you discover that you give place unto wrath? Should this be the case, you are evidently drawing back; if you give way ever so little, your fretful temper may grow into a violent one, your violence may produce hasty expressions, these—hard censurings, and an innumerable train of injuries you dare not think of, nor can think of without horror. By the like just judg-

ment, you might discover the first symptoms of a declining state, were the prevailing evil temper of your heart, lust, or worldly-mindedness, self-will, or envy. Do you see that you give way therein never so little, you may be assured that you only want temptation, to cause Satan entirely to prevail against you in every instance. Be ready therefore evermore to take St. Paul's advice along with you, and forgetting those things which are behind, press forward to those which are before, to the victories you have not yet gained, in the pursuit of the high prize of your calling in Christ Jesus."

Notwithstanding all the vigilance and care of Mr. Walker, he had perpetually the mortification of witnessing declensions among his hearers. The truly Christian feelings, with which he regarded this awful proof of the corruption and infirmity of man's nature, are apparent in a short letter to one who mourned over the backslidings of those who had professed themselves disciples of Christ, but now walked no more with him.

DEAR WILLIAM,

You must learn to stand by a little, and leave the Head of the church to manage his own matters. It is a mournful sight indeed when any fall back, and go no more after Jesus. Yet this ought not to make

us fret and repine, as if all were over. A sad view I have before me every Lord's day ; a multitude blind, and I fear past feeling. I speak, but they hear not ; nevertheless I cannot but acquiesce in the justice of the divine procedure, yea and be sensible that my unfaithfulness deserves much more, and wonder at the salvation God is working. What I mean is, you ought not to murmur against the ministrations of the Spirit.

* * * * *

With love to all,

Yours, S. W.

To Mr. Wm. Rawlings, at St. Columbe.

The holy resignation and subdued temper of Mr. Walker proved no hindrance to his activity ; he knew how to combine calm submission with the most fervent zeal. When the fruit of his ministry seemed to wither, he was patient ; but how anxiously he laboured for its ripening, appears in the following advice to a young Christian just entering the University.

DEAR SIR,

I might be thinking of pleading some excuse that so many of your letters lie by me unanswered, did I not know how too ready you are of yourself to think favourably of me, and how well persuaded you are, that I am no way desirous to neglect you. Whenever I can gain half an hour from a multitude of business, which you as well as myself think to be

of the greatest importance, I shall think it well and agreeably employed in your correspondence ; but I will not promise that this shall be so often as you may wish, though it shall be as often as you seem to me to need it. And now that I am writing, you must take things as they occur, and not expect that full answer which I must, on many accounts, defer to the time when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you. You have given me so many reasons to be assured of your sincere attachment to the cause of God, that I will freely tell you, I have not the least doubt upon me concerning it in your present circumstances. However, as I observe from your whole manner of address, that you are constitutionally warm and lively, we must have care that that which is quickly heated do not suddenly cool ; that holiness may have leisure to fix itself into temper and habit, before we adventure upon hazardous trials, and I must honestly assure you that the university will afford you abundance of them. Holiness in its first outset is usually full of heat and joy too ; both the newness of spiritual objects, when now discerned in a new and spiritual manner, and no doubt the Spirit of grace giving encouragement to the new born Christian, conspire hereto. But we may reasonably, as well as being taught by experience, expect that by and by these lively views will subside, the heats of transported religion will flag ; leaving the soul to a more substantial, rational, and manlike exercise, it may be without much of this stir in the affections. When this season comes, unless there be an *habituated* choice of the will for God fully obtained,

all is in danger. And till any one hath found by more than a trial or two, that he is a match for the present difficulties which the world administers to him, it seems not prudent he should adventure upon new and greater ones. You must endeavour to gain strength (as I see you do) by exercising yourself in fighting against the customs of the world, which offer in present circumstances. This, at once, is a due improvement of divine grace, and a building ourselves up for severer conflict. Fear of men is the great enemy of him who appears in a public character, with a commission under Christ. The discharge of plain duties, which are thought ill of, will prove the likeliest means of rooting out this fear; and the Spirit, if applied to, will co-operate. Suppose then you should at a proper time ride again to * * * * do you find any reluctance when you read this intimation? If so, it points out to you the fear I speak of and the remedy. Observe I speak of such a thing as a duty; and verily I think it such, when circumstances are weighed, and reasonable allowances granted, and opportunities for convenience and prudence consulted. I think it, under these qualifications, a duty to seek for a more edifying hearing of the word; and this I mention lest you might think it advisable to run yourself into trials uncalled for by Providence or duty. This is rash, and being of our own seeking, will end in our disgrace. Notwithstanding I am much pleased with the little attempts you have made for the young ladies, with your answer to your master, and your strictness in Sabbath duty. These are plain Christian exercises;

we may not decline such things without lukewarmness at least, and they will be found to add strength to our graces. You have been making a proper use of my papers, suitable to my design in transmitting them to you ; which is solely your own benefit or improvement. Pray if you write to any one but me, or some other in whom you have like confidence, be sparing of your Latin ; it is capable of a bad interpretation. Keep yourself out of debates ; they hurt the mind ; and labour not to be disturbed about names given to you or others by unthinking men. Your particular sentiments about the affair you mention in your last are altogether right, and the condemnation you pass on yourself relative to one circumstance of it certainly just. You will not now be hasty in coming to any engagements of that sort, which seem at present to clash with your views. Believe me, very sincerely,

Your affectionate and faithful,

S. WALKER.

Though with all his carefulness, this good minister had to grieve over the frequent and awful defection of many who gave promise of stedfast faith, yet at times he had the joy of seeing prodigals return. “ There were,” says he in one of his letters, “ many wet eyes last sunday among the backsliders : this is encouragement.”

Never was zeal more tempered with prudence and reflection than that of Mr. Walker. In fervour no one could exceed him ; and well would it have been

for the Christian Church, if to an equally warm heart many others had united as calm and thinking an understanding ! He had promised *canonical* obedience to his ecclesiastical superiors, and conscience, as well as inclination, moved him to order. His societies had cost him great pains in framing, and no common labour in bringing into operation ; but the instant a question arose as to whether they were wholly according to due discipline, he determined to sift the question to the bottom, being always ready to give up his most favourite schemes, when they interfered with standing and essential principles. Thus he never embarked upon any enterprize without a sure rudder and a proved anchor, and was consequently always prepared to meet the coming storm. It had been suggested to him, whether the meetings of his favourite societies might not be at variance with the spirit of the seventy second and seventy third canons, and he at once wrote to Mr. Adam, “ be pleased to give me your opinion how far the Canons oblige the conscience ? Do they oblige me in conscience not to go to our society ? or not to explain there some passage of Scripture ? Or do they oblige me and my friends not to set up any meetings in our parishes ? For my own part I am easy enough ; but this point seems to clog some of my friends, who are otherwise well disposed to such societies, seeing, as we think, an evident usefulness in, and indeed the necessity of them. Your judgment will I believe, be of service. If the canons oblige the conscience, the Bishop’s connivance or even licence cannot justify a non-

observance of them: if they do not, how far is his silence, disapprobation, or prohibition to operate?" It is evident that Mr. Adam's reply was in favour of Mr. Walker's original plan from the following expression in one of his letters. "Your sentiments about religious societies are peculiarly agreeable and fully satisfactory, at least to me; and I heartily thank you for them, and am by them confirmed in the interpretation I had before conceived of the seventy second and seventy third canons. Neither on this or any other account have I ever entertained a thought of departing from my dear company of Christian friends, whose union in this manner, is attended with more advantages and comfort than I could have imagined, without the experience I have of it." Whoever has had much experimental acquaintance with the difficulty of instructing a numerous flock, will be well aware of the impossibility of giving them a satisfactory knowledge of the nature and duties of religion, or of explaining scripture in detail, without some mode of bringing attentive individuals together, in addition to the ordinary and prescribed assemblages of the general congregation. Such meetings for the purpose of *confirming* the awakened under the usual means, are far from being contrary to the spirit of the Church of England, which commands its ministers to be "always doing the things which shall appertain to honesty, and endeavouring to profit the Church of God."¹ Nor are they opposed to the

¹ Canon 75.

letter of the seventy second canon in any way,—as a careful perusal will immediately prove: for its regulations had reference to unlawful practices of a nature altogether different from a minister's private instruction of his own people. The seventy third canon also merely forbids ministers to hold secret meetings in private houses, “to consult upon any matter or course to be taken by them, or upon their motion or direction by any other, which may any way tend to the impeaching or depraving of the doctrine of the Church of England, or of the Book of Common Prayer, or of any part of the government and discipline now established in the Church.” Those persons who have construed this canon into a prohibition of private associations for laudable and pious objects, have probably rather read in its title, “*Ministers not to hold private conventicles*,” than its contents. They have likewise given a sense to the word *conventicle*, in which it was not used in the body of the canon. These private meetings are constantly asserted to be unavoidable irregularities, and the zealous clergy are told that they increase their usefulness by departing from ecclesiastical rules. It is quite necessary therefore, that like Mr. Walker, we should be prepared to shew that our habits are not at all deviations from canonical precept, but rather in unison with it, when we “at all times convenient, hear or read somewhat of the Holy Scriptures, and occupy ourselves with some other honest study or *exercise*.”¹ Our church has suffi-

¹ Canon 75.

cient expansive power to extend its circumference to embrace the largest field of duty, without there being the slightest necessity for any minister to shape his course out of the line of its admirable circle. If rather more liberty were given to the clergy, it might prove very advantageous; but it must be conferred and used upon ancient and tried principles, or like most other modern innovations it will become either uncontrollable and dangerous, or dwindle away into nothing.

CHAPTER XI.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. ADAM ILLUSTRATIVE
OF THE FOREGOING NARRATIVE,—KINDNESS OF
LORD DARTMOUTH—SKETCHES.

CORRESPONDENCE OF MR. WALKER.

THE reciprocation of honest christian counsel, when judiciously managed, is one of the few springs of pure refreshment to be met with in our pilgrimage through a desert world. A more delightful example of it can scarcely be found, than in the correspondence between Mr. Walker and his esteemed friend Mr. Adam. The specimens already given of these free communications of thought and experience, cannot fail to have created an appetite for more. Mr. Walker was so occupied with his unceasing travail in the ministry, that he could seldom find time to sit down to write a letter; but when he did seize upon a spare hour for that purpose, he amply atoned for the necessary length of his previous silence. His letters

were never hastily penned, but were always the result of deliberate reflection upon the topics to which they adverted, and their very appearance indicates the coolness and thoughtfulness of their author, by the neatness and evenness of the lines, and the rare alteration even of a single word. What is wanting in them of polished style, is made up for by soundness of matter; and generally, his words were the best that could be used for his object, if they were not strung together with the happiest effect. His jewels were of the first quality; but the setting was not always well adapted to render them attractive. Here and there a spark of playfulness proves that his mind though solid, was not sombre. Mr. Adam was not less careful than his Truro correspondent. He reflected well upon the points on which he wrote, and took copies of his letters, many of which remain among his papers. The following letter was treasured up by Mr. Adam with great care, as is proved by the high state of preservation it at present exhibits. It contains four curious and important topics—advice on behalf of Lord Dartmouth, destined afterwards to become his friend in distress—the portraiture of the excellent lady whose hand he declined for the reasons previously stated—a reiteration of the plan he proposed with regard to J. Wesley's lay preachers—and a curious narrative of his own early history.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

Oct. 7th 1756.

DEAR SIR,

Your immediate answer to my last made it a double satisfaction. In things of a more interesting nature, I do, as I have great reason, much distrust my own judgment, and reckon it among the blessings of God to be helped by the sentiments of others more capable than myself. You have a diffidence, I see, like mine; though there be so much less need of it. But I suppose God means to unite us nearer in love by such real or apprehended necessities, and also to lay me under a new obligation to zeal and faithfulness by the provoking example of Lord D.¹, whose case you have communicated. I am revived and rejoiced at such an instance of the power of grace. Shall we not hope some great thing is in hand when Princes become nursing fathers?

I will not detain you with the overflowings of my heart on such an occasion; but since you will have my sentiments on his Lordship's case, will communicate them freely, such as they are. You will excuse me, I know, that I step aside a little from your advice, not because I see any thing wrong in it, but because it does not seem to come up with his Lordship's case in question. You rightly recommend that which is the very life and vigour of religion, a spirituality of temper. This doubtless should be maintained; we

¹ Lord Dartmouth.

should be jealous of whatever we find tending to weaken it, and whatever it be, should avoid it, if it be a thing *indifferent*,—otherwise it is evident the fault is not in the thing itself, but in our hearts: nor must we omit a duty because we are apt to do it amiss. The rule methinks goes beside the matter, and will not I suspect, be found on examination to discover what is duty and what is not, being conversant rather about the manner of doing than the thing to be done. Perhaps these two apostolic directions, “Do all to the glory of God,” and “let all your things be done in charity,” may more easily be reduced to practice, and serve as a discriminating rule. Whatever has not a tendency to glorify God and profit man must be avoided; for it cannot be our duty. And again, it implies, that we must labour to do our duty, so as to glorify God, and benefit our brother. This, being a universal rule for persons of all sorts, may, I take it, easily be applied to any rank of life, and will neither admit of retirement from the world on one side, nor of compliance with it on the other. To do our duty in our station of life under the guidance of zeal and love, seems to be the whole: for the latter directs to the temper, as the former to the things to be done. Meantime, as to zeal and love, there can be no doubt this must be the temper of the heart; but as to duty, there may be much question. Nevertheless the difficulty of seeing our way, is in the coldness of our hearts respecting zeal and charity: were these well confirmed, we should discern plainly in a thousand cases wherein, for the present, through regard to

human esteem, and influenced too much by selfism,¹ we remain under doubt.

You will observe, I consider the whole of our conduct under the view of duty, taken as comprehending what more immediately relates to worship, the public and private discharge of the special calling assigned us, and the exercises of courtesy; and to state the matter in this light seems less liable to error, than to make inquiry only whether this or that thing have any harm in it. The parts of duty just mentioned, comprehend the whole of a Christian's conduct: and beyond them I conceive a Christian cannot stir a foot, without departing from his character, and disgracing his profession; as also to fall short of them would at least be equally blameable. From hence I should conclude for Lord D. as for any meaner person, that the duties of worship, his calling, and courtesy, must divide his time. His main difficulty lies in the latter, to be in such manner courteous, as not to comply. He must have in aid to preserve him, a large stock of zeal and love; and so his temper being right, he will be obliging without betraying his cause,—which I conceive he must do, if he give any countenance to the maxims and ways of the world. He must not encourage in any sort, that vain idle way of squandering time so much in fashion, nor join in such things as are the great instruments of God's dishonour and of a total forgetfulness of all seriousness, in the persons of his, and indeed of almost every rank. Yet

¹ Quite as good a word as *selfishness*.

he must be courteous, receive his friends cheerfully, and entertain them with a degree of liberality proportioned to his fortune and station. Yet I suppose he must have especial care that his civility do not run him into an abuse of time, and so the neglect of the more important duties, whether of worship or his calling. And in this view, I should be heartily glad if his Lordship were well rid of those fashionable amusements, which are so nicely contrived to kill time, and souls with it. On the whole it will be safer for the honour of Christ, and for himself, that he lean to the side of denial rather than of compliance and conformity,—which I can look on in no other light, than fighting the devil with a weapon he puts into our hands, and which we may be assured, shall do him no mischief.

I shall be glad if any thing I have said may give you the least light in a thing of such consequence. And I beg you, dear Sir, to lay aside your too great distrust of yourself on this occasion ; for that fearfulness you have of giving Lord Dartmouth advice, plainly shews how important to religion his lordship's conduct will be in your judgment of the matter, and therefore what a right he has to all the help you can lend him.

What I press upon you I have been forced to myself, respecting Miss * * * * *, whom I may have possibly mentioned before in some letter. She is a person of distinction in this county, and I believe the best fortune in it. She had enjoyed all the advantages that education could give. Her natural parts were good. Her constitutional temper remarkably tender and

humane. Besides all which, she was every thing in religion but a Christian. The *world*, I think, has not often brought out a more finished production. About three years since she came in the way of my ministry; being some months on a visit in this place. It pleased God to open her eyes. Dr. Clark was not able to support her, who had been her guide; the truth was discovered, and she is walking in it with eminent exemplariness. Indeed she makes a noble profession; but it cost her the loss of all things. Her friends and relations have forsaken her, and her former acquaintance are afraid of her, though her conduct towards the one and the other is remarkably meek and forbearing. You will rejoice I know at such an instance of the power of grace; an instance so peculiarly fit to beat down formality,—for she was before universally esteemed among the best of women. You would be pleased to see how carefully she endeavours to improve this advantage to the honour of Christ. In such circumstances, forsaken by all but a few despised Christians, she needs encouragements; and I request you, my dear Sir, to write her a letter to that end, directed to Miss * * * * *, at Whiteford, near Callington, Cornwall.

I am very thankful for the free communication of your sentiments about my correspondence with Mr. Wesley. My meaning was badly expressed, since you could not apprehend me. My expedient was, as lay-preachers would hardly submit to be laid aside, that as many of them as were fit might be ordained and fixed on cures; and the rest might have

their mouths stopped by being used only as inspectors over the societies. You will see by John's unaccountable answer, how little good I am likely to do them. For which reason I have not, nor shall have any more to do with them, than to give them my opinion when they ask it.

A long journey I suppose would do me service. But it is impracticable. Were it to be done, I should certainly see you. However if my time and purse permit, I shall attempt it another year, God sparing my life. Riding and sparing myself as much as I have been able, have done me good. But to say the truth, the Sunday's duty is become too hard for me : yet I see no possibility of getting an assistant, being myself but a curate under a neighbouring clergyman, whose natural defects and blameable timidity are such, that he has never done the least thing since I have been here. While I am speaking of myself, I seem disposed to speak more of myself to my friends, though I know not why, but to entertain you and please. S. W. who is the son of a gentleman of some fortune in Exeter, was sent to Exeter College, 1732, on the expectation of a Fellowship, as a great uncle of his had been a considerable benefactor there. However, when the election came on, he was disappointed ; and came into the country in 1737, on a curacy. Here he was invited by Lord Rolle to attend a brother of his in his travels. They spent about a year and half in France, but were prevented from going farther. About the time of his return, Lord Cathcart desired his company into Italy with a son of his ; but

it was refused by S. W. on a piece of honour. He came into Cornwall in the year 1740 to hold a living for a minor. Here he narrowly escaped going to sea as a ship chaplain with Captain Edgecumbe, at the instance of Lord Edgecumbe, and had a greater escape from a very unpromising attempt for matrimony. In 1746, the minor being of age, he removed to Truro, and soon after had a small living given him, which he held with his curacy; *but non-residence began to make him uneasy, as soon as God began to deal solemnly with his heart.* About four years ago the living he first held became vacant, and was offered him. He could not be reconciled to non-residence, and judging it most for the interest of religion that he should stay at Truro, he refused it, and also resigned the other. It was the happiest day of his life. He was eased of a grievous burden, and will never more undertake a charge to which he cannot attend. When I have said this, you will see what sort of a poor friend you have fallen upon, yet one who loves you heartily, and he trusts all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

I suppose you received the paper I mentioned for the use of young clergymen, as I sent it a post after my last. I shall be waiting for your corrections and sentiments."

Mr. Adam wrote to the Cornish lady, as Mr. Walker requested. The letter was dated Nov. 19, 1756, and is an admirable one. Had it not been already printed in the first volume of his Posthumous Works and

elsewhere,¹ it should have been presented to the public in these pages. The conclusion is, however, too beautiful to be omitted—"My desire is to animate you to ardour and perseverance in the glorious race ; and my hope is that whatever state you are in, you will set no value upon present attainments, but be always pressing on to still greater heights. A progressive state is a hopeful one, because it is both sincere and self-condemning ; and if it has one eye upon perfection, keeps the other steadily fixed upon Christ. To Him, your Saviour, gracious helper, and bountiful rewarder, I commend you, and myself to your prayers, and am from a far country, Madam, your's in Christian sincerity."

The world may perhaps wonder how Mr. Adam could write thus to a stranger whom he had never seen ; but the Christian will understand the privilege, whereby those who are one in a common Saviour, can merge the formalities of fashion in the freedom of edifying communication.

Such was the high opinion Mr. Walker entertained of Mr. Adam, that he scarcely ever lost an opportunity of availing himself of his advice on any important ministerial undertaking. Amongst other things which he submitted to his consideration was one of the *Schemes of Private Instruction*, given in a foregoing portion of this volume. As the present chapter is intended to be partly composed of correspondence illustrative of the previous history, the remarks

¹ By Mr. Westoby, in his *Memoir of Mr. Adam*, whose original copy is in my possession.

which were made on it by Mr. Adam will not be out of place here. In a letter, dated Nov. 19, 1756, he thus expressed his opinion :—" You will think I have taken a long time to consider your *Instructions*. My opinion of them is, that they are the result of great knowledge and experience, and well calculated to answer the end you intend by them. It would certainly be of excellent use for every one who puts his hand to the plough, not only to have a regular well digested scheme of christian instruction in his head, but to chalk out to himself a method, and carry on those who apply to him regularly according to it, as far as the variety of cases will admit: for some variety there is, though I apprehend there will seldom be occasion to deviate from your rule. All the fault I find with it, is somewhat too great a nicety of distinction, which, if it is not both just and necessary, will perplex rather than edify. I have my eye chiefly on the beginning of Sec. 3, which, upon a review, perhaps you will think proper to cast into another form, and not say without some explanation, that repentance follows faith, because one kind of it necessarily goes before, nor split the hair as you do, betwixt repentance and sanctification. I know you mean *evangelical* repentance; i. e. hatred of sin as such, and kindly mourning over it in a sight and sense of divine love, the will's choosing God for himself, and refusing the world. But how to distinguish this from sanctification, I know not. I readily grant that there is occasion for the exercise of repentance in every stage of our progress, and that the best kind of it flows

from, and is concurrent with, sanctification ; but still it is a part of it ; and I fear never what you seem to intimate, viz. purely evangelical, without a mixture of legal sorrow, as there is also some evangelical mixture in the first legal actings of it. Would it not then be better to leave the word repentance to the place commonly assigned it, and stick to the usual order of repentance, faith, holiness ? — or, by shewing that repentance must never be laid aside, and that the most genuine tears of it are those which drop from the eye of faith enamoured of holiness, and working by love ? Was this one thing you meant, when you said Dr. Patten was but partly right ? For he puts repentance first ; as he well may if you do but understand him as to the kind of it, and what is most generally understood by the word. Upon the whole I very much desire that your scheme of Instructions may be fitted and published for *general* use, as it might be with very little alteration, or addition ; though I do not prescribe to you in that particular, and need not observe that if printed in that form as advice to us all, it will not be less serviceable to the clergy than if it was particularly directed to them, but pave the way for, and greatly facilitate their endeavours. Excuse another hint. In the point of faith, which if any other, requires to be well settled, you allow a latitude. Be as large as you well can in others, without prescribing a measure or settling the *quotum*. E. G. in the case of a *clear sight and sense of the great sinfulness of sin*, some complain all their days that they have it not, nor, consequently, that sorrow and detestation of them-

selves for it, in the degree they could wish, and as some others have, who nevertheless earnestly desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, and must, therefore, neither be considered as unbelievers, nor triflers with the will of God for their sanctification. *An actual determination to forsake every sin* includes all: other marks admit of high and low; but this alone enters into the essence of true repentance." In these remarks upon the First Scheme of Private Instruction, which Mr. Walker evidently constructed with great pains, and altered from time to time, Mr. Adam has certainly hit upon one of the leading faults of his friend's generally luminous mind. In his over anxiety to be clear, he sometimes ran into the very error which he intended to avoid, and confused what he designed to illustrate. This has not unfrequently given rise to objections against his views, which have been obviated on further explanation. The simplest mode of stating any subject is generally the best; while too much straining, especially of theological opinions, is like over-polishing a mirror,—which renders its reflections dazzling and undefined, where they might have been otherwise clearly distinguished.

In the same letter, from which the last quotation is taken, Mr. Adam again alludes to the frequently discussed subject of the Methodists:—"What shall I say to you," he writes, "of the Methodists? May I venture a word in your ear? Some of their proceedings would certainly have been condemned in all ages of the Church; and yet may we not acquiesce in that

remark of Beza upon those words, 'forbid them not,' &c. *extraordinaria nec damnanda temerè nec probanda?*—especially as there is so fair an appearance of numerous conversions, and by their means, of great searchings of heart in many who do not join them. Really, my dear, dear Sir, there is a black cloud hanging over our heads; and if we look round about, it is hard to say who else must save us from being as Sodom and Gomorrah. I should like to know Charles Wesley's opinion of lay-preaching, and how he reconciles it to his strict notions of conformity. Methinks his brother has taken a step farther in vindication of it than he needed to have done. If he could not rest the point upon necessity, it will avail him but little to condemn parochial settlements in the gross, and all kinds of preaching, as not capable of edifying for above a twelvemonth without a change of hands."

True enough it is that a black cloud did hang, at the period alluded to, over the Church in this land; but one effect of it was to cause the few beams of true light which broke through it here and there, to attract general, though seldom friendly, attention. While we cannot *approve* the proceedings of the various zealous nonconformists, we cannot possibly venture to *condemn* them, further than to deprecate their want of *order*, and the idea of carrying their example into the present times. They said of the regular clergy, who refused to join them, that nothing prospered in their hands: to which Mr. Adam replied,—“None can pretend to say that no good is done by its being known far and near that

we put our shoulders to the work.” How much these tidings had spread is further proved by the fact, that his little work on the Catechism came in a very short space of time to “a third edition,” as he tells us, “of fifteen hundred.” This statement in a great degree confirms the opinion enlarged upon in a previous chapter, that the Church has arrived at its present state of usefulness, by the gradual influence of those who laboured according to its rules, and not by those who having first separated themselves, sowed the seeds of separation till they brought forth weeds of every possible kind over the entire face of the country. Among the Methodists, a continual change of ministers may tend to keep up excitement; but it is utterly fatal to the private discharge of the most intimate pastoral duties. Would that more clergymen in the last century had thought with Mr. Adam! It would also be well that his opinion should be reflected on by those persons who have hastily proposed a union between the Church and the Methodists, which will not be effected unless a vast change takes place in their constitution and proceedings. He remarked to Mr. Walker on this subject, “You will take notice, that *what the Methodists are? What good they have done or are likely to do?* are questions we do not meddle with. What we¹ agree in is the impracticability of their being incorporated into the Church; for at present, according to your definition of a church, they are certainly out of it.” Both as to doctrine

¹ The word *we*, refers to Mr. Adam and Archdeacon Basset.

and discipline, the like difficulties remain to this day ; yet at the same time not a few of the Methodists command admiration of their zeal, and respect for their integrity, in standing forth to oppose the enemies of the Church of England ; and what may be the beneficial issue of their noble conduct, to themselves and to us, no one can yet determine. We, however, must not abate one iota of principle for the sake of *any* support. To this, honest men would prefer even a fall, believing in the power of God to lift us up again in his own time, and for his own purposes.

While Mr. Adam corresponded with Mr. Walker on general topics, he did not forget the personal attention due to one from whose letters he had derived so much profit. He had drawn from the laborious curate of Truro an account of his exertions, self-denial, and straitened circumstances, that he might be made the means of relieving him. He wrote to him—"By the account you give of yourself, I am convinced that worldly accommodations have never been matter of consideration with you ; but that you have conducted yourself with a view to usefulness, though with the loss of outward advantages. I am not sorry that I drew this account from you by inquiring about your situation at Truro ; but that you may acquit me of impertinence, must tell you why I did so. My intention, provided you are only curate then to another, was, with your approbation, to lay the case before Lord ———, and put it home to him to furnish an annual stipend for an assistant, in order

to the saving so valuable a life, without removing you from the scene of action where you seem to think Providence has placed you, by blessing your labours, and where, if I mistake not, you choose to abide. If I am mistaken in any point, you will set me right. Should your rector not be willing to admit of such an assistant, though without any charge to him, there is an end of the matter. But if he should, what think you of my applying to Lord ———? Do not his letters to me give a fair opening to it? If he should flinch upon trial, it will be only my labour lost; and I dare venture to assure you, that I will divest myself of all fear in the case."

The next letter, illustrative of the previous history, is from Mr. Walker, and addressed to Mr. Adam at Wintringham.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

March 9, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

Since I received yours (more than two months ago) I have had a new and unexpected field of action opened to me, by three companies of soldiers coming hither to winter quarters. At first I feared the bad influence such kind of people might have upon us. But having reviewed it, it appeared a dispensation of Providence, which demanded my attempting something for their service. With what success you will be able to judge from a letter I sent

to a friend on that occasion, the main parts of which I transcribe for your entertainment. What do you judge of a thought in my head to write the Archbishop of Canterbury¹ an account, not of what I have done, nor with what success, but of the ignorance I have found them in, occasioned principally through a disuse of catechising? They are of more than twenty different counties, and not one had the benefit of that instruction. Might not one from such a circumstance intimate with modesty and decency enough, the necessity of reviving an effectual catechising? I have already said as much to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge; and took occasion from thence of recommending *Adam's Catechism* as a proper addition to their list of books. The soldiers left us soon after Christmas, and are now at Plymouth, from whence I have very agreeable accounts of them. Will it be an amusement to have the regulations drawn up for their society, under which they are now meeting weekly?

A catechism I drew up for their use accompanies this, which also I desire to submit to your correction. Mr. Canon thinks it may be of use if published; but then it must have scripture proofs subjoined at length to every answer, which will swell it considerably. There you will see my notion of repentance more distinctly. I would speak in the common way; yet so as to ascertain the difference of ideas. That repentance which goes before faith can be only legal, consisting of legal fears and selfish concern. This,

¹ This has been alluded to before.

as in Judas, is called repentance ; yet my meaning is, in the instructions, that it might not be mistaken, for the saving grace called by the same title. You will see in the catechism, I suppose with you, that there is seldom such an evangelical sorrow as is without mixture of legal fear, as also that there is Godly sorrow mixing with the first actings of legal fear, at least where the work ever comes to any thing. But in my view of repentance, as the turning of the heart to God, neither sorrow nor fear goes into the essence of it, though the one and other be (according to the state of the soul) accidents inseparable from it. This distinction seems to make the matter clearer, and more satisfactory to tender consciences, as also I suppose it scriptural. Your remark on such expressions as are too narrow, and serve to exclude and disquiet, is altogether just ; and I shall take care to alter the passage you hint at, and any others that run that way. You would have the instructions appear in that form which will best render them generally useful. What particular form have you in your eye ? I shall be glad it may be as generally useful as possible. And now shall I say, dear Sir, I am knit more closely to you by the freedoms you use with me and my performances. Spare me not, I beseech you, in any kind. But especially tell me my faults and your fears about me. You will not think how much I need your help, and with what satisfaction I receive your letters. Our motto shall be, *debemus amici si quod sit vitium, non prætermittere.*

There is indeed a heavy cloud of divine vengeance

lowering over us. I deserve my share, whatever be the event. Yet many are praying, and some working. The Methodists have the lead among the latter. I suppose if God spare the land, we shall be principally indebted to them. Nevertheless I could wish their foundations deeper laid, without which they will generally come to nothing. I converse with many of them who come in my way, freely and affectionately, and see cause to lament in them their utter ignorance of the depths of apostate human nature. Some will hear, others will not ; for a discovery of natural corruption throws the evidences of faith into another channel than that of feeling, and so gives a shock to their favorite assurance, which they still preach as the one thing needful. A preacher among them, who himself is in the humble way, told me he asked a *round*¹ preacher about a month since, what foundation he had for preaching that doctrine as he had been just doing, and was answered, “ ’tis our way,” yet he hoped well of others who had not that assurance. It would be a good thing to set them right, if it could be done. I have attempted it with some success on a few of them. Is it not a token for good that the Sunday clause² is laid aside ? It made me tremble more than any thing I have ever known. The zeal of Mr. Basset and his clergy is singular, and therefore more commendable. We could get nothing done. Our archdeacon, who sel-

¹ A travelling preacher.

² In the Militia Bill. It was strenuously opposed by Archdeacon Basset and his clergy.

dom comes within a hundred miles of us, was applied to, that after your example an address might go up to our bishop. He was determined to incur no displeasure, cautiously wrote to the bishop to be informed if it would be agreeable, and got for answer, that the bishops were pretty averse to such applications from the *Clergy, as thinking they may tend to inflame, but that the bishops will be on their guard.* So it all dropped, not much to the liking of many of us, who thought the answer insufficient at least. It is not much to the honour of the clergy that none but dissenters should publicly appear in such a cause, except the honest archdeaconry of Stowe, which has been highly commended by all in this country, and indeed the bulk of the kingdom.

It is high time I should acknowledge my obligations to you for your intended attempt with Lord ——— in my behalf. Indeed it was not hastily I could get an answer on that head from my principal, the most timid creature in the world, and with whom I can only live on civil terms. He was vastly fearful he might incur some general reproach by having any hand in procuring me an assistant, as it is a main object with him that the world may know he does not patronize my proceedings. However, if it might be done so that he should be no otherwise concerned in it than to give his consent, he would make no objection.

* * * * *

Such a testimony of your friendship, dear Sir, is

highly agreeable to me ; and equally so whatever be the issue. I will be plain with you ; what need of reserves with such a friend ? I am a curate, and by necessity a house-keeper, in a very dear country. I pay too much to my principal¹ to make my own circumstances altogether sufficient, though I keep, by the way, on the right side of nothing. Were my income a little augmented, it would enable me to use more horse-exercise, and at the same time to get assistance when I should need it, and on the whole more effectually answer your good design. I have only to insist you do not move a step in this affair, which may put you to the least difficulty. Should by this time any obstacle be in your way, let the matter sleep, and think not once you shall need make an apology.

Miss * * * * * communicated yours,² and had discernment enough to fix on you as the author. So I confessed, and advised her to commence a correspondence, which I hoped would not be disagreeable to you, nor unprofitable to herself. Your letter was just to my liking. And I am glad the thought of desiring you to write to her came into my head. She is indeed an excellent woman, for her standing in Christianity, has had a sufficient share of trials, from which she seems to me to come out much refined, and from her peculiar circumstances will need all the help we all shall be able to give her. You will hear from her soon, if she has not wrote already.

¹ Probably for house-rent.

² Mr. Adam's letter before alluded to, which he wrote at Mr. Walker's request.

One thing more, and then I will dismiss you. I mentioned awhile ago a young gentleman to you, who had turned his thoughts to the ministry. Mr. Jane has taken him with him to Oxford to assist him in his parish there, and the bishop of Oxford has promised to ordain him.¹ But we have another, Mr. Burnet, his friend and companion last year at Christ-Church. For, to say the truth, he is all I could wish him, and I doubt not will be eminently diligent in the ministry. His getting into orders will we suppose be attended with no difficulty, as he is a Master of Arts in the University of Aberdeen, being one of that place, and brought hither by my father and his countryman Mr. Conon, to assist him in the school. We cannot get him a title in this country for evident reasons. Can you serve him in yours? I venture to answer for him in every respect; and we shall be glad if he may be near you, since we cannot keep him near us. Young men always need advice; and I assure you he would be glad to take it.

I wish success to the third Edition of your Lectures. Sure it looks well that such antiquated principles sell. You will have one of my Lectures. I send it you on condition you tell me what faults you find in it. I transcribe the last I used, which was on Sunday sennight.²

¹ The young man was Mr. Haweis.

² Mr. Adam asked for it in a letter.

THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD.

Having followed Christ through the steps of his humiliation, we are now to consider his exaltation,—both in his *Godhead*, which before lay more hid in his manhood, but now more eminently manifested itself in it—and in his *manhood*, wherein his *soul* becomes enriched with all knowledge and grace possible to a creature, while his *body* is freed of all infirmity, and glorified.

The first branch of his exaltation was his *Resurrection*. *He rose, &c.*

1. *Explanation*.—I do not stop on the *fact* or *time*, plain in the Scripture,—and expressed in these words—but come to the doctrine of the resurrection, in which five things are to be observed. (1) By his resurrection he did approve himself *God*, raising himself up by his own power—and *Lord* over all, especially Death, the Grave, Hell, and the curse of the law. (2) Hereby he manifested the fulness of his atonement. (3) He took out the acquittal of all believers from all the penalties of sin, so that repentance and remission might be preached. (4) The efficacy of his Resurrection; he quickens our dead souls when we come to him. (5) He is a quickening spirit respecting our mortal bodies—the first fruits from the dead as a representative.

2. *Duties*.—(1) We must be dead to sin. (2) We must walk in newness of life. (3) We must seek the things which are above.

3. *Unbelief*.—(1) Lying dead in sin. (2) Sloth and lukewarmness in religion. (3) Seeking earthly things.

Believe me, with all my heart,

Your affectionate and obedient,

S. W.

This will be acknowledged to be a most interesting letter, but the next is equally characteristic, and its contents prove the sincere friendship of Mr. Adam, to whom it was written by Mr. Walker.

April, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

Yours requires an immediate answer, and a great many thanks more than I can give you. But those you do not desire, and will hardly think you deserve.

You understand my views regarding the ministry, that I prefer service to profit, and therefore have been desirous of continuing at Truro, unless a more enlarged sphere of usefulness should be thrown upon me. Be assured, my Dear Sir, that I tremble at the thought of appearing more publicly than I now do; and that were a removal proposed to me, the prospect of being more serviceable must be very clear indeed, before I would stir a foot. But I have not the least grounds to suppose I could be any where else so helpful as here. Yourself will judge when I tell you that the work is spread abroad largely into the neigh-

bourhood, and that very considerably, in no less than six ¹ different places besides Truro, while the direction of the whole seems to lie in a manner altogether on me. Humanly speaking, inconvenience must follow my absence or death. Your scheme therefore is peculiarly agreeable; and I have not the least objection in any sort to your moving it to Lord —. What would I wish done? I would wish such an addition were made to my yearly income, as would enable me to get an occasional assistant, and to use horse exercise for the re-establishment of my health. Had I a stated assistant, the help I could have from him would not be considerably more than from an occasional one. And besides in that case, I should be no better enabled to bear the expense of horse exercise. If therefore you submit to his Lordship's consideration,—the state of the work of God here—the narrowness of my circumstances—the weight of labours lying on me, and my inability to provide an occasional assistant—my no very good state of health in comparison of what it was, though now much better than a year ago, and want of exercise to improve and re-establish it—you will represent my desires, and I am sure I shall not be disappointed if a favour to which I have not the least pretence, be not granted.

I heartily wish you may succeed for George Burnet. Nothing will please father Conon and me better than

¹ Another proof of the gradual influence of the example of the *regulars*.

having him near you. As for the country, George is a Scotchman ; and for the pecuniary conditions, he will take what you may agree to in his behalf ; so should the thing offer, do not let it slip through your hands while you are writing to us. Nothing will hinder George's acceptance but a pre-engagement, of which at present, he has no immediate prospect. I am sure you will like him mightily.

His brother, Tom Haweis, is at Christ Church, and doing service among a few of the young gentlemen there. He tells me to-day, he is remarked as a dangerous fellow ; and adds, that Romaine has been again in the University pulpit, where he preached imputed righteousness, but it is said will be allowed to preach no more there.

Once more I thank you, Dear Sir, with all my heart, and am in brotherly affection,

Yours,

[S. W.]

That the generous nobleman to whom reference is made in these Letters, was Lord Dartmouth, will have been more than suspected by the reader. As however his name is *blank* in the original, so it was necessarily transcribed. Immediately on Mr. Adam's application, his Lordship afforded liberal assistance to Mr. Walker, who informed him of the issue of his friendly interference in the following terms.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

May 12th, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

I ought to communicate to you the success of your negotiations, which issued in a bill of fifty pounds, brought by the last post, inclosed in a very obliging christian letter. As this bounty will sufficiently answer the purpose it is designed for, so it is evident to whom mediately the thanks are due, and proper acknowledgments of gratitude would be made, if it was not known they would be disagreeable. There seems a particular necessity of keeping this charity a secret here; and therefore you see I express myself in terms, though intelligible to you, yet so general as to disappoint any impertinent curiosity we suspect is sometimes used in prying into our letters at the post office.¹

The inquiries you have lately made about me, have set me a wondering. I have never asked any particulars respecting yourself, which it is among the little delights of friendship to be acquainted with. Your heart I know very well. But for the rest, my imagination² has figured you a man upward of fifty, unmarried, your stature not of the sons of Anak like mine, your frame slender, your complexion dark, rather tending to the colour of your book, having contracted somewhat of its whiteness by much ac-

¹ This was also clearly the cause why Lord Dartmouth's name was not written out in full.

² They had never yet met.

quaintance. I fancy you are constitutionally cheerful, and somewhat warm. You do not talk overmuch in company, perhaps rather reserved. You know the world, and are well received. With such a person I sometimes hold an imaginary conversation and call him my friend Mr. Adam.

But my dear Sir, I have little time for such ideal entertainments. Scenes present themselves daily which demand my whole attention, and claim all my labour and prayers. Blessed as I have abundantly been in my ministry, yet what a people! A quarter part of them never enter the church doors. Too many reject what they hear, not a few turning it into ridicule. The most go on their own way. When I beseech them by the mercies of God, they are unconcerned; when they are persuaded by the terrors of the Lord, they rail. Above all things it breaks my heart to attend their sick beds, where I too often find them secure and ignorant in the hardness of their hearts, it may be wishing to die merely to be rid of their present pains, or if a little awakened, yet so uninstructed as to leave me at a loss where to begin with them. There are now no less than three near death, and in a dreadful security, from which my attempts have not seemed in the least to move them. Here I have learnt and been animated to diligence in catechising, as the best method for preventing such deplorable deaths in the growing generation. But what shall I do with those already in years, hardened, unteachable, sunk in cares and pleasures? I would attempt somewhat for them, but I can think of

nothing more than I have done. Pray help me if you can. Suppose I should draw up a very plain explanation of the ten commandments, with some close applications respecting the curse of the law, and the necessity of faith in Christ? I find when they would set themselves to search out their sins, they have no foundation, through the want of knowing the law in its spirituality. Is there any little plain thing published already that would serve this purpose?

You bade me send you one of my lectures, I beg your thoughts upon the matter and manner; honest old Perkins has given me the greatest assistance. He has a practical turn which exactly suits me. You will favour me as soon as you can with your sentiments on the papers in your hand. A word or two if you please of the state of your parish, though I think I see that pretty well in your lectures, and of your method of proceeding with them, as far as you judge either will do me service. Be assured I am, dear Sir, with great affection and respect,

Yours,

[S. W.]

To these letters Mr. Adam thus replied :

To the Rev. S. Walker.

June, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

I acknowledge myself in your debt for two or three letters, and am first to thank you for a sight of your Catechism. A good heart, and a working

head are inseparable ; but I immediately reproach myself, and cannot pursue this reflection. I have returned your paper with corrections. If they are just, you will perceive that it requires to be altered or new modelled in some parts. Certainly something of the kind is wanted from *our* quarter. I advise publication. There are many searching pieces from the dissenters ; but the notions of predestination and assurance are so twisted with them, that one knows not how to recommend them. Pray return the corrected paper when you have made use of it, if it can be of any. I supposed your *Instructions* would be as useful, and less offensive, if they were not immediately addressed to those for whom they are principally intended. The archdeacon is positive for pushing the affair of catechising with the archbishop, or wherever else you think proper, and I am far from dissenting. You want nothing from the world, and are one of the happy men who can be hurt by nothing but your own conscience. Thanks to you for mentioning a certain catechism to the society ; but to tell you the truth, I never supposed it would be consistent with their views ; nor would a recommendation from you be likely to help the matter forward. I hope this is not over-grating ; you know whereabouts I am.

I should like to see your regulations for the soldiers. Thanks to you likewise for your lecture on the Resurrection. I should think it too didactic or dry for verbal instruction, but success refutes me. I suppose you dilate practically. God is with you in all you say and do. Go on and be humble. I can make

very little impression seemingly in my own parish, though I am not altogether idle and unconcerned. But I do not despair, and hope I shall persevere to the end. Besides catechising the children on Wednesdays, both children and young persons separately on Sundays, and lecturing the whole congregation, I have just gone through the Gospel of St. Matthew with a very small company one evening in a week. It is not my first essay of this kind, and with God's leave I shall resume it when the busy time is over. The exercise, I hope, will not be without some profit to myself at least, as it puts me on a closer reading and inspection of Scripture, and thereby of my own heart. I have sent you the reading, or comment, or what you please, on part of one chapter, because it partly coincides with your design of opening the law of the ten commandments in order to conviction of sin. You ask me if I know of any plain thing already published, that would be a help to you. Where can you have better direction, surer footing, or more sacred authority, than from Christ's own manner of opening them, Matt. v. ?—and that, as I apprehend, first in order to conviction, and not to practice till faith fits us for it, and enables us to eye the commandments in their whole spiritual extent, both for serious endeavour, continual humiliation, and love of Christ the performer of them for his people. The last of them not only takes in the heart, but sets it as a guard upon all the rest, and shews that we shall be fatally deceived, if we do not take God's rule into our hands in judging of ourselves. St. Paul

tells us he had overlooked this matter, and was very near being undone by it, Rom. vii. Frank, in his *Manductio ad Lectionem Scripturæ Sacræ*, which I recommend to any young student of your acquaintance, mentions Chemnitius,¹ in *Locis Theologicis*, which I never saw, as having laid down twelve most excellent rules for investigating the sense of the decalogue intended by the Holy Spirit. But the man who has got the knack of squeezing his own heart, knows infallibly how to expound them all according to the proverb, "Set a thief," &c. Do you think I am going to expose mine to your view, as a part of that character of me you desire? The Catechism has given you as favourable an impression of me as I could wish, and I will be at no pains to undeceive you, especially as it would cost me not a little to come at the truth. Besides, your curiosity does not seem to reach beyond the exterior. You are sadly out in the article of marriage. I have been in that state betwixt twenty and thirty years, but have no children living. My wife is, and I have reason to be thankful for it. I have no genius for being rich, and durst not if I had. In spite of good Bishop Sanderson, who says, "the man that balks the opportunities of bettering his condition wants wit, or grace, or both," I have balked several; and especially, since I read Dr. Newton against Pluralities, have not yet chosen to be the most innocent of dualists, with a prebend added

¹ A famous Doctor of Divinity in the Church of Brunswick. Melchior Adam speaks of him in the highest terms. He was born in 1522.

to my living. I resided at Hart Hall till I was near Master of Arts standing, but removed thither from Cambridge; and to convince you that I was not whipped from thence, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Hutton, who was my tutor there, recommended me to our bishop at his first coming here, at the head of his list of friends. In consequence of which recommendation, he desired me to preach at his primary visitation, when I surprised him very agreeably with desiring he would give me nothing till I asked him. From that time you may be sure he would set me down for a fool, and report me accordingly to Dr. H. which will satisfy a further curiosity you might have to ask, why the archbishop himself has done nothing for me? I have seen him several times lately at his palace near York, and other places, and he is always very civil, but does not choose to break through the court rule. Those who do not seek will never find. And besides, he may have been told that I am, what you know I am not, a Methodist. I will enter into no further detail of views, and a few words more will complete the history of my life. After a youth of levity and frolic, more than study, I came hither in the year twenty-six, to a living of 200*l.* per annum, which was ready for me at twenty-four, with some repute for learning, a tolerably smooth outside sense of decorum, and not without some qualms. Though I had swallowed a camel on taking orders with some exceptions to the articles, and more for the sake of worldly advantage than any thing else, yet from the very first I strained at the gnats of plurality and non-residence, though with a

deceitful heart at the bottom, insomuch that an uncle in high reputation in the law, who had set his heart upon advancing me, and could have commanded any thing for me, pronounced me mad. These qualms by degrees brought on others, and ripened me into your friend and acquaintance, *The Catechist*, and here I am expecting my dissolution with a degree of comfort,—though you may be sure, with no pleasing retrospect. The rest of me you have hit off surprisingly, and some spirit good or bad must have stood at your elbow. My stature is little; my frame slender, so that a small degree of labour brings on lassitude: my complexion is pale, but a little bronzed with fifty-five. I am tolerably cheerful, and more than somewhat warm. I do not talk much, and wish I talked less. The world takes me for an honest man, and as such I am pretty well received; but the greater part of my acquaintance, who are pleased to say I was once all air, smartness, and repartee, do not think I have made a good exchange for my present reserve, which by the bye, is most natural to me,—for I had a very uncommon settled gravity in my countenance from a child, which those who are inclined to take things by the worst handle, now call austerity. So much as I have given you of my character, may furnish you with hints for my improvement, which I most seriously request of you, and add one stroke more to it, which is, that I defy you to chagrin me with any liberties. I shall think a certain person¹ has partly missed his aim, if you do not come

¹ Lord Dartmouth.

to finish the picture. I doubt not but you have paid your devoirs there. He writes thus to me—"I am truly thankful to you for making Mr. ———'s¹ situation known to me. It happens not to be in my power to assist him so largely as I could wish: what I could spare I have sent him, and shall be very ready at another time to supply him further. He, with all who are of the household of faith, have a more especial claim upon me, who have received the good things of this life. God grant they may not turn to my future condemnation!"

I leave you to your own pleasing reflections upon this lovely young man. I have had a letter from Miss ———² in the truest style of christian simplicity, and answered it as well as I could; but tell you, you do not use her well in putting her to a dry nurse.

Attendance upon sick beds is generally a heavy clog upon us. As people live so they die; I have hardly met with an instance to the contrary. When the senses are dull, the understanding clouded, and the whole man disabled with pain and sickness, or stupified with the apprehension of death, humanly speaking, what is to be done? And yet we are tied, as it were, to force disagreeable advice upon them, and cram christian prayers down their throats. It is certainly a delicate, critical part of our office, and which I am far from thinking myself equal to. Methinks it would be well if we applied ourselves closely to the work of conviction in case of recovery.

¹ Mr. Walker's.

² The lady before-mentioned, to whom Mr. Adam wrote at Mr. Walker's desire.

The affair of Mr. Burnet's curacy here, is at stand for the present. I thought I should have wrote now for his coming; but my neighbour pleads compassion for trying his curate a little longer, upon seeming penitence, and large promises of amendment. Dear Sir, God bless you in your heart, work, and health. I am, with my most cordial respects to Mr. Conon, very sincerely and affectionately yours,

[T. A.]

P.S.—I deferred writing in expectation of seeing Lord D. at Doncaster, in his way more northward; but he now tells me that Providence hath disposed of him into other parts."

A correspondence of this kind between any two pious ministers, would command attention; but as that of the author of *the Private Thoughts* and Mr. Walker, it cannot fail to be read with the liveliest interest. While it contains *sketches* of these two eminent divines by their own hands, drawn with fidelity and skill, it also exhibits the generous and consistent character of a nobleman who was ready to confess Christ, and to promote the cause of his gospel, at a period when such conduct was sure to bring down upon him the reproach of the world. Fortunate is it that there remain such proofs of the excellence of those zealous and enlightened men, who were made instruments of sowing the seeds of truth, which, were the husbandmen better agreed, would now bless us with the animating prospect of a most glorious harvest.

CHAPTER XII.

MR. WALKER'S DISCIPLINE OF HIS OWN MIND.

WEIGHT OF HIS CHARACTER, AND SELF-SCRUTINY.

HITHERTO we have been engaged in considering the character of Mr. Walker as the diligent and effective minister in his own parish, according to the regulations of the Church of England, as well as the faithful monitor and discreet adviser of more distant correspondents, who desired to profit by his counsel or example. Although his scruples of conscience had straitened him in his circumstances, and he filled no higher situation than that of curate of a small town at the extremity of the kingdom ; yet he had attracted the attention and commanded the respect, of the most eminent of his pious cotemporaries. The most popular leaders of the religious portions of the community were not indifferent to the keenness of an eye that marked, and the power of a mind that weighed the consequences of all their movements, and were anxious to know, if not to be guided by, his views of

their proceedings. The homage paid to the opinions of such a humble individual may surprise, until he is followed into the retirement of his closet, where he so devoutly communed with his God, that, like Moses from the mount, he came forth to shine before men. He was also in the habit of the most rigid self scrutiny. All the discipline he recommended to others was first practised upon himself; and his knowledge of the secret idols of the human heart, was the result of a diligent search, under the guidance of gospel light, into the hidden recesses of his own bosom. In order to the full developement of his character in this instructive point of view, it will be advisable to follow the train of reflection constantly before him, in the still chamber of self-examination, prayer, and penitence.

One of his first objects seemed to be, a constant desire to cherish a recollection of his days of unfruitfulness, with a view to humiliation before God, and to stimulate himself to more zealous exertion. There were times which, he told Mr. Adam, he “could never think of without great self abhorrence.” He felt ashamed that “conceit and interest” had guided him to Truro; that “by his worldly-mindedness and ignorance of vital religion, the service of Christ was prostituted, the souls committed to him starved, and he feared, many of them perished; and that he had sought his own glory in the very pulpit where he was placed to proclaim the Redeemer!” “I know not,” he says, “how to endure the reflection: mourning over this scene I shall go to the grave. It is not a

lost case indeed; we have an advocate with the Father; but I can never undo the wrong I have done to God and man." This was not a vain expression of morbid feelings, tending to damp the joy of a soul reconciled to God through Christ: he fostered the impression for a definite purpose, and like a true believer, remembered that no portion of experience is valuable which has not a determinate use. "I reap," he observed, "great benefit from it." The remembrance of my unfaithfulness humbles me, though not as it ought; and as I desire, stirs me up to diligence and to labour more abundantly: and what I chiefly rejoice in, serves in some measure to repress that conceit, wherein my desperately wicked heart would needs swell one thing upon another." Such recurrences to our condition before conversion, cannot fail to be extremely profitable, while a whining effort to drown the joyous feelings of a hope full of immortality in the slough of a past life, is both injurious and intrinsically wrong. Repentance will form the daily exercise of a true believer; but if he is under guidance from on high, he will make a practical use of it. Every tear which swells not the gentle and unceasing stream that gives freshness and fertility to graces of christian love, is shed in vain.

Mr. Walker was extremely attentive to the manner in which his mind was influenced by the opinions and conduct of men. "I feel," he said in his diary, "a lurking desire of man's esteem, mixing with the natural timidity of my constitution, which makes me inwardly draw back from any approaching trial, in

which I am to look in the face of persons of an angry and violent temper." He was, however, enabled in a great degree to conquer that feeling, by "the mighty influence of the Spirit of God," and had grace given him to persist "in the discharge of his duty in opposition to this secret enemy." He was anxious also not to be wanting in honest indignation against sin, without ruffling his temper or experiencing injurious perturbation of mind. To this end, he cultivated the grace of compassion for the offender, recollecting what was said of our blessed Lord—*he looked about upon them with indignation, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts*; ¹ yet upon a review of the occasions, when he had been thus excited, he could, in the year 1756, only remember two instances, in which he had "been angry, without plainly seeing sin." It is impossible to conceive a closer imitation than this of the example of our Redeemer, or a more instructive instance of self-examination.

A sense of the presence of sin in all that he did, was a leading characteristic in Mr. Walker's notices of his own experience, and he caused it to act as a beneficial check upon his feelings when too much elated by success. "I have most zeal," he remarked "and least wildfire, when I am most humbled in the sense of my sins;" and to this observation he added a fervent prayer for the grace of humility. "Lord," he exclaims in one place, "for thy mercies' sake, make me vile in my own eyes." He marked all the uncharitable feelings, all the forward, peevish, and

¹ Mark iii. 5.

impatient workings of his mind ; he battled with the pride of his heart, seeking the enemy diligently, that he might overcome him ; he noticed and guarded against his wanderings in family prayer, and his indvotion in public worship—in short there was not an action of his life which he did not examine for the purpose of improvement, caring not how deep and painful the probe, if it did but reach the bottom of the wound, and extract the poison of the sting of sin.

He not only kept alive a recollection of the presence, but a sense of the sinfulness of sin. In one of his journals he writes, “ I was striving much in prayer, last night and this morning, for a sense of the sinfulness of sin. My heart seems to have been quickened by it through the day, to keep a little close with God.” No one knew better the difficulty and the necessity of walking with God, and of truly fervent and heartfelt prayer. He expressed himself to a correspondent on these subjects, in the most powerful and striking manner. His words are—“ Oh what an important thing it is to walk with God ! What a comprehensive phrase — what a lovely part both of our duty and privilege ! But alas ! how many difficulties and obstructions do the enemies of our souls lay in the way. Unbelief draws a veil before our eyes—sin builds a wall across the road—the world spreads a thousand snares to entangle our feet—the devil attacks us with his fiery darts, and self, wretched self, joins issue with them all, and either gives or takes occasion against us continually. When I reflect how many they are that rise up against me,

how weak my best defences are, and what a treacherous party I have, as it were, within the walls, how many things there are that amaze me ! I am surprised to think that I am upheld, that a spark of divine grace is still preserved in me unquenched, amidst an ocean of sins, snares, temptations ; and yet I am alive, and trust to live for ever,—for he who is the truth hath said, *because I live ye shall live also*. Oh, blessed be God for Jesus Christ ! When I look to myself, what do I see but sin and misery ?—but in him I have righteousness and strength ; in him I have life and peace. O my friend, let us daily learn to go out of ourselves, and look unto him, lean upon him, live upon him. *All fulness* is there ; emptiness, yea worse than emptiness is here. In short, with respect to myself, I find both comfort and crosses, feasting and fighting, in the experience of every day. A body of sin and death constrains me to cry, *Oh, wretched man !* the knowledge of a better righteousness enables me to sing, *I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord*. Oh, what a mine of comfort is comprised in that last verse of Jeremiah, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love !*

“ I was exceedingly pleased with my last visit to my London friends, and hope it was attended with an exchange of blessings, and that we are mutually helpful to each other. These serious interviews, between those who are cemented by the double ties of grace and friendship, are among the happiest seasons of this frail life ; but yet they are short and changing. We meet only to part ; blessed be God

for the hope of meeting hereafter in a better place, upon better terms, and to part no more.

“ I am, my friend, still a prisoner it is true : thanks to the tender mercies of God, my prison is both a Patmos and a palace. His gracious presence is with me night and day. Oh, he is good, is good indeed, and it is good for me to be afflicted. It is equally good and pleasant for me to be in Gethsemane’s garden, or mount Tabor, or tossed up and down by the storms of this world, so I can but see his countenance and hear his voice saying, *It is I : be not afraid.* Happy for us that a throne of grace is always accessible to poor sinners ; and secret prayer is the one great thing in experimental religion, the mainspring (if I may so say) which if not kept in order, the whole movement of vital, heart religion must grow faint and languid. On the contrary, shut me in a dungeon, or fix me on a mountain, let me see neither men nor books, (if such a situation was my lot, not my choice) provided my heart were enlarged to call upon the Lord, I should be no loser. On the other hand, if I spent every day in reading the best books, in hearing the best preachers, in conversing with the best men, if secret prayer was not carefully kept up, and every other means watered and improved by this, my soul would starve in the midst of plenty. Union and communion with Jesus is the greatest mercy on this side eternity, and that perfected is the heaven of heavens. May you and I have an abundant entrance therein through our precious Christ !—Amen.”

This letter most powerfully expresses the devout longings of a believer after God, and the grief with which he views the barriers sin has cast in his way to a throne of grace. Mr. Walker's harp however was not always on the willows; its chords often swelled with the harmonious raptures of a "heart much drawn up to God, and approving his service and presence." He most carefully analyzed all his emotions in prayer; and once, when conscious of more fervency during a week of trial than he was after it had passed away, he asked himself this searching question, "Am I driven to Christ by necessity, or drawn by love?" As to his exercises, he feared they "were rather meditations that warmed his heart, than devout supplications." Still he could speak of the "steady believing frame,"—and this more particularly, when he "regarded only his wants and the promises of God." At another time he would say, "I get a glimpse of God in prayer, and lose sight of him again as soon as prayer is ended:" he even confessed, and every true Christian must feel the force of the confession, "I scarcely ever keep him in view through my devotions." He found himself, he says, "greatly defective in actual communion (*out* of prayer at least) and whether he sought God's face *in* prayer for *his* glory was not quite clear"—"this," he adds, "is plain, I do not seek his face so importunately as I ought." Such mingled cloud and sunshine form the experience of every Christian, who is conscious that the brightness of heaven's pure light is too often rendered dim to the eye of faith, by the mists that

rise out of the sinfulness of his own nature. To the true believer, however, there will seldom fail to appear a bow in the darkest cloud, reminding him of the presence of the sun of righteousness ; and when he cannot enjoy sensible assurances, he will derive comfort from the tendency of his desires and actions. This was eminently the case with Mr. Walker, who remarks, “ while I seem to have no sensible delight in God, I am not however without some evidences ; particularly I would improve opportunities of serving Christ, in the conversion of sinners.” On another occasion, after the sacrament, he observes “ I am not returned rejoicing. My frame has been somewhat disordered ; yet I think I have not been careless. Sure, I deserve no favours ; so I will endeavour to be thankful for, and to improve what I have received,—a composed purpose of heart to serve the Lord, in opposition to the desire of my heart of men’s esteem.” After all, this was the most satisfactory indication of his state before God, inasmuch as habitual devotedness can only arise from a genuine spirit of love.

The last remark of Mr. Walker on his feelings after leaving the table of the Lord, naturally leads to the consideration of a striking portion of his private experience—constant inquiry into the use he had made of the ordinances. The institution of the Lord’s supper would be much more valued, if it were celebrated by every Christian in a spirit similar to his. He both diligently prepared for it, and afterwards inquired into its effect on his religious comfort and advancement. All that he recommended to others,

in his sacramental addresses,¹ he strictly attended to himself; and the consequence was, that the eucharist became to him an overflowing channel of the richest covenant blessings. On one occasion his words are, "Sunday next is sacrament Sunday. My thoughts have been somewhat drawn this way by the exercises of the week. I am much called on to lament my little profiting by the last supper, and little desire after this. What a tendency has my heart to pass over duties in a customary manner!" This is indeed a tendency common to us all; but Mr. Walker's vigilance prevented its gaining the advantage of him. On the Sunday, just before going to the sacrament, he says, "last night my heart did not cordially acquiesce with God's sentence against sin: and though the matter be pretty well cleared up to my mind; yet I ought to seek carefully more light upon it. I would go to the table like a pardoned rebel, who is *still* half a rebel, with great humility and thankfulness, to remember the great means of salvation represented in this ordinance." Such was his preparation for the solemn privilege of the communion; and though he did not always find the happiness he sought, he seldom returned without some solid consolation, indicative of steady perseverance in the sure though varied path of life. "Just returned from the sacrament," he wrote² on May 29th, 1757, "where I met an unwonted rebuke; the enemy had great advantage of me, taking occasion

¹ These will be given in the Miscellaneous Works, and will form a very valuable portion of them.

² Vid. Wills's Spiritual Register, vol. iii. p. 20.

of the fewness of the people present, especially of the society, to raise up reasoning mixed with resentment, when it was suggested whether the society people did not dislike coming with others, and were influenced by pride. I could get no deliverance from these thoughts, though they were earnestly prayed and contended against, till the last people were receiving, and was in a manner prevented from the exercise of every grace. *Yet in the midst, I could see the Lord gracious*, and thought I could justify him. I have been confessing my sins, and seeking the cause; but see no special reason, being in every thing sinful." How many ministers are thus embarrassed in the sanctuary, by the provocations of their favourite people!—but too few, it is to be feared, are able to subdue their emotions even at the last moment, or are led to charge home the painful effect upon their minds to its real cause, the remains of sin within themselves. The lesson conveyed, however, by this description of Mr. Walker's state of mind, when annoyed by the carelessness or wrong spirit of his people, is not applicable only to ministers; it should teach those who have derived benefit from their labours, to be more attentive to such appearances as promote their tranquil enjoyment of the appointed means of grace. Happily for the pious curate of Truro, he was not always so tried; he had his seasons of real delight at the Lord's table. He thus declares his peaceful frame of mind—"by the endurance and goodness of God, I am alive this day, and have been enabled, without disturbance, to renew my covenant of grace. Praise be to God,

my mind was clear, my conscience quiet, and with due deliberation, and without distraction, I was before the Lord. I must bless him also that the ordinance was with comfort. Faith seemed in exercise more than usual, to see, receive, and in some measure to appropriate Christ to me in communicating. Though always I have cause to complain of the hardness of my heart, yet now I could in some sort mourn and love. I found heartiness in my purposes of serving the glory and interest of God in Christ, and was forward to make full surrender of myself, depending upon divine grace. It has been a day with me signally marked with divine favour. Notwithstanding the insensibility and unbelief of my heart, I am returned rejoicing." The day-star, which had in truth arisen in his heart, never failed to emit some rays of hope and comfort to cheer the darkest seasons of his pilgrimage; and when in the animating moments of its unclouded brightness, all the radiance of the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" beamed forth in his soul, he knew well how to temper his high emotions, by the corrective of a holy, humble fear. "What now," says he, after this keen enjoyment just alluded to, "shall I render unto the Lord? *It may be, some greater trial than ordinary is at hand.* Let me be mindful therefore of the vows I have this day made." Such is the true use of the gospel ordinances, instruments simple in themselves, but alike suited to the spirituality of our religion, and the material infirmities of man.

The reflections of Mr. Walker, when attacked by

sudden illness, are remarkable proofs of the piety and wisdom of his truly renewed heart. When visited by a violent disorder during the night, he learnt from it the following valuable lessons—the importance of every hour he lived ; that the dying bed is not for the work of religion, which must be the business of our healthy days ; the necessity of not permitting the things of this life to veil eternal interests from the view. To borrow the idea of his equally experienced friend, Mr. Adam, God never put him into a great fire, for a little one was always sufficient.

The uncertainty of human existence was constantly before him, and the awful thought that “in the midst of life we are in death,” suggested these beautiful observations, in a letter to an afflicted young man, who was high in his esteem. “It shall be well if any dispensations of Providence confound that atheistical tenet of our nature, which perpetually suggests to us the confidence of living. I remember Bishop Hopkins spends a good half of a funeral sermon, in proving by various arguments that we shall all die ; and in the view of the confidence of life that is in us, it was judiciously done ;—though I confess it made me wonder at first reading, and no doubt many of his audience thought he was upon a needless employment. We have been told of death, and seen it ; it has been seldom hid from us a month together ; it has come into our houses, and taken away a father, wife, child ; but has all been enough to shake our stated confidence of life ? For a day, perhaps ; but the habit has remained. Yet you cannot find any thing by

which the world is so much strengthened as this. While this remains, every present thing has great importance : let this be taken away, and what force have riches, pleasures, reputation, reproach, afflictions ? We read in Isaiah of those who had “ made a league with death.” We all do so naturally : it is a covenant of peace, that death shall not come nigh us, and so we enjoy ourselves at ease. This covenant, God, in mercy, is always aiming to break, by pressing the sound of death continually in our ears. But though God does this, we shall be never the better, nor our confidence of life be shaken, unless his grace also go along [with it.] Of this David was made sensible ; else he had not called on God to teach him to number his days, that he might apply his heart unto wisdom. O my friend, could I but live in that expectation of death, which both the certainty and uncertainty of its coming demand, and consequently in the immediate view of an eternal judgment, what manner of man should I be ! How above and dead to the world ; how diligent and active in my Master’s work ; how undisturbed by a thousand things which now disorder me ; how quiet under all afflictions ; how content in my station, &c. &c. ! Surely to learn to die is a lesson hard, yet most needful to be learnt, else God would not so discipline us in it ; and who will say he has got this lesson so perfectly as to need no further teaching ? If not, is it not a mercy in God to be still instructing us in it ? Is it not stubbornness in us, if we do not hear the instruction ? Comfort us, you say—think of death and what lies behind. By the

grace of God, bring yourselves near the departing hour. It will shew you what you are and should be, and will suggest the plainest way in the world of improving your present heavy trial."

Another delightful characteristic of this good man's disposition was, that though most keenly alive to the frailties of human nature, he felt kindly towards all men. His penetration never disturbed the charity of his heart. He discovered imperfections only to pray over and forgive them. The glance of his piercing eye caused no man to dread him as an enemy, while it awed into a fear of doing wrong. He prayed for "a charitable temper, to endure with meekness" the outrages of the violent, "the prejudiced mistakings" of the ignorant, and the calumnies of slanderers. "O my God," was his fervent petition, "give me all needful direction, that I may speak boldly and prudently among them, without pride or resentment"—a desire worthy indeed of one whose conversation was in heaven. He seemed to 'discern the spirits' of all who approached him—the hypocrite and the open foe were equally unconcealed from him. Yet he could pray for them all with hope, pity, and endurance, only desiring that the same grace which had infused into him this heavenly forbearance and loving-kindness, might also be communicated to their souls. There is no finer evidence of the power of religion, than a sagacious perception of what is in man, qualified by pure benevolence.

Mr. Walker was eminently vigilant over the tone of his conversation. Once he says, when on a visit,

“ I resolved to be silent in the company I was to meet, if I might not be serviceable ; and have found this evening the need and difficulty of being so.” He was, however, careful that this reserve should not arise from a proud or morose spirit, or from the too common desire of many good men, to be idolized by and to awe those with whom they associate. This is evident from his adding to the last sentence, “ God, grant me the spirit of meekness and charity.” When the conversation took a pious turn, he also marked its real tendency, and found it sometimes “ rather about religion than religious ;” and he well described those discussions which frequently take place between serious people, as “ love destroying debates.” His sensitive mind, when once unstrung, was not easily attuned again. He describes himself on addressing his people, as “ carried away from his attempts to say much to the purpose, by the insignificance of conversation :” and even after talking about non-important things with his sister, he found it to be injurious to his spirituality. It is clearly impossible to prescribe any positive rule for the conversation of ministers, inasmuch as what is only cheerfulness in one, would become frivolity in another ; and that deportment which would have an appearance of vanity, display, levity, domineering, or moroseness in some, would, in differently constituted individuals, be received as charming communicativeness, delightful animation, powerful talent, and admirable self-possession. The chief thing is always to aim at doing good, and to examine carefully, in retirement, the motives, character,

and effects, upon our own experience, of our mixture with society.

The great labours of Mr. Walker brought on a nervousness of temperament which occasionally destroyed his comfort, but over which he was very watchful, although probably ignorant of its real cause. He guarded against the peevishness and impatience it engendered, with the most exemplary care ; and whenever he had given way to a hasty feeling or expression, he mourned over it in secret, and prayed for grace to conquer the propensity. When about to collect his offerings from house to house, the custom of Truro in those days, he asked himself—" am I prepared for a repulse ? I should be careful neither to indulge anger or disdain." When preparing to meet the vestry, he inquires, " when shall I be able to look the world in the face ? Surely, while possessed of such animal fears, I am in perpetual danger of disgracing my profession." When those who came to him occupied an unreasonable portion of his time, he was grieved at being impatient—" my heart was rising to impatience when I was kept longer than I expected ; it seemed to humble me." His struggles for self-command were not unsuccessful,—as is plain from the brief but important remark, " was opposed, and I was not uneasy." This frame of mind is to be attained only by such means as he daily used. Few persons pray as he did—" Lord turn the fear of men's faces into a love of their souls." From the high degree of self-knowledge he acquired, by his unceasing search into the inmost depths of his own

bosom, he was enabled to estimate every grace, attainment, and experience, at its proper value, and never, (to use his own idea,) put them in the place of Christ. He did not rest his hopes upon the sense of his own condition, when his frame was satisfactory ; nor did he suffer a conviction of his unworthiness to obscure his faith in the atonement. “ To be humble,” he observes, “ in the sense of my vileness, and to believe the sufficiency of Christ, I find the two hardest things I have to attain.” Again he says, “ God has removed some trials I have been under, yet I would remember that Christ is our peace ;” and he rejoiced that “ his salvation depended not on himself but *Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*, though he was himself so changeable.” Here we have a forcible example of the true end of watchfulness over the state of our minds—acquaintance with self, leading to a more accurate view of the all-sufficiency of our Redeemer, and bringing faith into its most powerful exercise. Much fruit is the true evidence of abiding in Christ, the vine, and not our own notion of the languid or free circulation of the vital sap, over which we are too apt to rejoice or mourn, in a manner that impairs our entire dependence on a union with him through his Spirit, both for living principle and abundant produce. All Christian experiences, like the changes of nature, are useful if they lead to fruitfulness and faith ; but whatever destroys our activity, leads us to forget the sufficiency of a crucified and risen Saviour, or removes us from a humble posture at the foot of his cross, is detrimental to the soul.

Hence the whole character of Mr. Walker's private communion with his own heart, invariably terminating in a removal of his thoughts from himself to Christ, is a most important lesson to those who desire to possess the only satisfactory proof of the genuine work of divine grace in their souls. We are apt either to over-value, or not to rate at their true worth, the frames of a renewed spirit; and each of these habits is fraught with equal danger, the first leading to legality, the second to carelessness. The happy medium was attained by the wise and spiritual subject of these pages, who tried by every available test the reality of his Christian character, but never permitted either a sense of deficiency on the one hand, or a pleasurable experience of consistency on the other, to remove his eye of faith from the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of a guilty world. Whether his bark was tossed upon the furious waves of life's agitated ocean, or sailed in peace upon its tranquil bosom when the storm had passed away, his trust was in one pilot, one star, one helm, one anchor, and one builder and preserver of the work of his own hands. The pages of his diary were not swelled with the nauseous symptoms of religious hypochondriacism, and the fancies of a fitful temperament; but contained accurate and careful notes of the changes in Christian experience, in order to check an enthusiastic, and stimulate a languid state. He, however, applied no human sedative, used no temporal excitements, but went directly to Christ, and sought his happiness and strength in him alone. The assur-

ance of his humble faith, the emotions of his love, the shadows of doubt, the wrong workings of perverted reason, the pride of his heart in preaching, conversation, or exercise of influence, the character of his private devotions, were all tried by the standard of divine truth, and were cherished when satisfactory, and corrected when injurious. His grateful soul was not a desert that drunk of the dews of heaven and produced no verdure in return, but every cloud seemed to drop upon it fatness and fertility, so that each season of spiritual enjoyment was followed by some instance of zeal for the glory of his Redeemer. His piety was such, that like the rose, he breathed forth sweetness of his very nature, and that not the sickliness of fulsome profession, but the healthy perfume of the blossoms of a tree the Lord had planted, and was nurturing to his own glory.

Eminent as was the piety of Mr. Walker, he did not escape those evil suggestions of the enemy of man's peace, which are occasionally permitted to ruffle the holy calm of a believer's acquiescence in all the revealed purposes of God. At times, as has been before mentioned, he felt a want of full consent to the sentence denounced against sin, and painful hesitation as to the perfect goodness of the supreme being; but their ultimate effect was only to lead him to right views of divine things; so that, like the forest tree, whose roots are forced deeper into earth by the tempest which agitates its branches, he became more firmly established in faith. When thus tried he said, "I must seek more light:" and it soon broke forth in

his bosom "like the morning," and his spiritual health "sprung forth speedily." Right reflection discovered to him the impossibility of reasoning on the perfections of God. He saw that all the fundamental propositions he might lay down with truth of a finite creature, would probably be wrong when applied to an infinite self-existent Creator. We cannot fully understand a single attribute of Jehovah, nor form any more comprehensive idea of that vast system he is pleased to carry on in the universe, from the small portion of it before us, than we could of the immensity of our globe, from a single blade of grass gathered on its surface. In this our imperfect state, we have only to receive what is in mercy made known to us, and to remember, that as a reluctant will must obey the commands of God, so a reluctant reason must receive his revelation, not because of the *matter* but of the *author*, whose inscrutable designs will be developed to the new faculties of our glorified souls, when the glass through which we now see darkly shall be withdrawn, and heaven's pure light shed upon the mysteries of godliness, become to our admiring eyes, the interpreter of its own designs. With views such as these Mr. Walker wisely observed, "Were I incapable of answering ten thousand objections which do not affect the main doctrines of Scripture, I should not doubt the truth of them." He also found his faith greatly strengthened by reflecting on the applicability of the gospel to his own wants: "I see," he remarked, "such discoveries of God respecting him to *me*, as just that

very Being I would desire him to be." Such were the springs of his faith, and of his daily works of love: thus he polished his breast-plate, sharpened his sword, and strengthened his buckler, and came forth, in the shining panoply of a Christian, to "endure hardness" as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and to wage a successful warfare against all that was opposed to the honour of his Master, and the best interests of his fellow men.

CHAPTER XIII.

PASTORAL ADVICE, AND OPINIONS OF MR. WALKER.

THE WISDOM AND PIETY OF HIS COUNSELS.

What has been already said of the character of Mr. Walker, will have naturally led to the expectation of some instances of his zeal and discretion, in confidential intercourse with those who appealed to him for pastoral advice. His schemes of private instruction have made us acquainted with the searching nature of his conversations with awakened persons, who were disposed to lay before him the state of their minds. During these interviews, he fully explained the scriptural doctrines of conviction of sin—of man's misery and helplessness—of a knowledge of Christ's sufficiency—of true faith and repentance—of the conflict between two opposite principles, grace and the remains of sin, in believers, and of a spiritual growth of the love of God in their souls. The conversations which took place during these interesting moments have,

with both minister and people, passed into the oblivion of the grave ; but there yet remain letters to his friends, containing valuable records of the judicious piety of his secret counsels. The extracts from his correspondence, about to be given in the present chapter, will shew how well qualified he was to be the guide of such as enjoyed the privilege of communicating with him on the solemn topics of Christian experience and duty.

He wrote, in the following decisive terms, to a pious young man, whose religion had involved him in that great trial of Christian sincerity, parental opposition. “ I am favoured with yours, and have communicated it to your good friend. We both approve the steps you have taken, and desire you to expect opposition and difficulties in the work you are about. To say the least, the various interests and views of people will make a diversity of judgments, and throw difficulties in our way. How far these may be concerned in the oppositions which meet you, is not very material, since at least no reasonable and religious motive hath been proposed, which had any ground to weigh, to the laying aside your purposes. You are most certainly to have an especial eye to salvation in every earthly transaction, much more in the general scheme of your worldly business ; and in pursuit of this you are to be swayed by no destructive advice whatever. Perhaps you have not a greater trial to contend with, than the disapprobation of near and well affected relations. I think the honour due to parents is not implicit and blind ; it means submission

to this one purpose,—that children may be made the better children of God. Where therefore there is an interference herewith in parental injunctions, disobedience does not dishonour them; nay parents ought to be unattended to, even in much younger persons than one of twenty-six. How far your views are religious and prudential withal, your conscience must determine for you; but be abundantly careful that whilst you judge for yourself, and differently from your friends, you be actuated by a meek and filial disposition, shewing a more peculiar tenderness in all your expressions and carriage.” After a few remarks on an affair of business, he proceeds, “I must wish you to be aware of impatience and resentment under the opposition you may meet with at this time; nor let the contention of others drive you to an overhastiness to expedite that which demands much cool thought and attention. Pray let it be your nightly care to recal the workings of your heart in this view, with earnest prayer for direction and strength.”

He offered this beautiful congratulation to a good man on the birth of his child:—“I certainly rejoice in all your joy, and pray that all your comforts and crosses may be sanctified to you. Your trust increases; see that your grace does also. Every child added, gives so much additional weight to the arguments of the world in the heart. There is a new idol to engage the affection, and a new care to solicit anxiety. Strive hard, my dear friend, as you do, to keep your heart unspotted from the world, and

excuse the affectionate fear of one who is a friend, though he desires not to be accounted a father."

To one who complained of a defective frame of mind, he wrote, "You complain of your frame. The fault is in your heart; and that, not so much in the want of sensible affection (which having been much used to, and having found very pleasing to yourself, you know not how to be without), as in the unbelief, murmuring, and unthankfulness that seem to have too much place in you. It is the hardest thing in the world to be satisfied with, and to trust the perfect righteousness and atonement of Christ. We are always ready to look for a Christ in us, rather than a Christ in heaven, and to be easy, not so much because of what we find in him, as for what we find ourselves. My dear William, are you sure there is perfect redemption in Christ? Doubtless, you say. If so, why are you not satisfied, inwardly satisfied, in whatever frame you are. Christ is able to keep you, but you are not enough persuaded of it. That persuasion should lie at the bottom of your heart as your confidence, and only confidence in your highest frames, (else you rest on them rather than him) and then the same confidence would be your satisfying support when in the lowest frames. And I am sure, this way you are always and only fit for service and improvement."

He thus excited a convert to steadfastness and patience, when attempts were made to shake him by reproach. "Stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved. Your friend is too much concerned about his interests; yet I hope not a little concerned about his soul. Stand

still, and you shall see the salvation of God. Leave all your matters with him. Indeed it is no wonder he is moved when all the world is railing at you. Nevertheless be assured he thinks you right, and values you the more for it at the bottom, though he be teased by the impertinence of ill tongues, and the fears of his own heart, to be a little unguarded and hasty. A man awakened, and yet not master of the lusts of his heart, is the greatest object of pity and prayer."

To a person afflicted by the death of a friend, Mr, Walker wrote, "I cannot but look upon it as a rare act of a gracious Providence, that your friend should die here in your arms, and desire you not only to make the serious reflections which so awakening a circumstance demands, but to bring them as near as possible to the present state of your soul; and, that it may not slip you, to commit to writing the purposes you now find possessing you. These are excellent days of grace when properly improved; and may God give the due influence of such a warning to your own heart, and direct you in applying it to others! I am apt to hope it will be peculiarly useful to his brother, but perhaps am too mistrustful, when I suggest my fear that you will soon see the girls as usual. If you prevail with them not to seek for ease and comfort under their present circumstances, in trifling and unprofitable company, you may hope something. But press upon them the wickedness of a life of amusement; endeavour to shew them the danger of pleasure, and engage them to keep out of

it for a season. They know not the sin or danger that lies in the abuse of innocent things. As you speak of their compliments to me, this is the most useful service I can offer them, with my kindest service and pity. You know that you are at all times at full liberty to make any thing of mine your own, as far as you may judge necessary ; but as to what you say, I think your address should be general, while you speak of the excellences and consolations of the Christian salvation, especially as exerting themselves in the dying hour——O my friend, I was near the borders of death but a week ago ; suddenly seized, in danger of a hasty summons. God hath lengthened my days, but how unequal am I to fulfil his good purposes of various sorts herein ! He that bade me live, says ‘ my grace is sufficient for thee.’ Here will I hope.”

When requested to see a person who was alarmed by apparently defective evidences of a state of genuine conviction, he thus expressed his kind acquiescence. “ Mr. —— I shall be glad to see ; and will deal freely with him, God helping me. I am really concerned for him ; but you may learn from his case the wide difference between awakenings and humiliations, between a fear of God’s wrath and a deep true conviction, between a sight of sin, and a sense of its sinfulness. I wish there may be not very many, who are in a way of coming to nothing through this mistake. I think I have known abundance, and wish it may not be the fatal mistake of the poor Methodists. A clear and distinct sense of the evil of sin, not merely

as we are, but as God is affected by it, is the main thing ; which not obtained and maintained, there is no saving work done in the soul. The ruling principles of the heart are still selfish, notwithstanding the most vehement terrors or joys ; and there is not a jot of that resolute calm abiding choice that God rules in the heart, and over the world."

We have an instance of his deep acquaintance with the devices of Satan to destroy our faith, in what he says upon a trying case submitted to him for advice. "I heartily pray God to bless your endeavours with the poor woman at Padstow : her case is truly lamentable, but not rare. The advice you have offered is such as I think right ; and that upon this ground especially, that she seems not quite void of faith, though it be very weak, and the evidences of it altogether hid from herself. The contrivance of the devil is evidently, in such cases, to drive from the means by terror, and thereby to lead into carelessness, debauch, &c. The counterplot of his device is this :—to select some two or three chosen promises, such as, 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' &c. wherein the word of promise is evidently without deduction, and seen as soon as attended to ; then to press them home in a peremptory way, such as, 'you dare not say, you will not have the boldness, the confidence to say God cannot, is not willing to forgive you ; I rest it with your own conscience ; speak, dare you say so ? I have seen such a peremptory way suddenly to shake and confound despair, i. e. to put Satan to some shame, and to gain an immediate ac-

knowledge that nothing was wanting but the sinner's return. But though this desired end do not evidence itself upon the spot, yet it will work afterwards, and frequently recur in the agitations of the troubled mind. [It is proper] to enjoin a strict observance of means, arguing from the mere possibility of salvation, and to warn in an especial manner, against idleness, vain company, and flying to any sinful course for relief, to which there is most cause to fear the party may have recourse according to circumstances. Suppose your next letter were an attempt in the peremptory way first proposed."

To a zealous but much opposed young Christian he wrote, "the various opposition you meet with ought not to discourage you; rather, knowing from what quarter it comes, to make you comfort yourself that it is a proof of some shock given to the kingdom of darkness. Blessed are they who are instruments in this cause; yea God's blessing evidently attends their labours, insomuch that even opposition is made to further their undertakings. This I evidently collect from your representation; and what would we more than to be servants of Christ, though suffering ones? O, my friend, neither our labours nor sufferings deserve our Master's notice, yet they shall be gloriously owned one illustrious day. Opposition is apt to warm us, and that warmth to render us imprudent, and to make us grow, as it were, desperate. Be cool and patient; steadily, meekly, and silently pursue your project."

Mr. Walker's love of order has often been adverted

to in this work : the following caution to an active layman is an additional proof of it. “There can be no objection made to your meeting, by persons of common sense ; but you see what the world is waiting for, that they may be able to blame you that you should undertake to preach. God hath so remarkably blessed our *regular* scheme, that from thence, as well as from the unjustifiableness of any other, we can never keep too clear of the imputation lying upon the Methodists, that they set up lay-preachers.¹ I would beg you to use all imaginable caution, that no one may have the least ground of insinuating this, from any thing you may do ; and to this end, when you are at your meeting, that you be confined to reading, prayer, and psalm-singing—psalms rather than hymns. While we go on regularly, we shall be able to vindicate ourselves, and what is more desirable, leave it still in the power of clergymen to countenance us whenever they may be disposed to it ; whereas if we grow irregular, we take away that power from them.”

The next letter was written for the comfort and encouragement of one of his most attached and pious correspondents, Mr. W. Rawlings of St. Columb ; and the observations it contains are most worthy of the attentive consideration of every one, who desires the

¹ We cannot be too careful to distinguish between *Lay Preaching*, and *Lay Agency*. The latter is an essential help to the minister ; the former is an encroachment on his peculiar province.

spread of truth, and the growth of vital Christianity in his own heart.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

I will beg leave to put you in remembrance that Christ's kingdom is not of this world ; and therefore we must not expect that it will succeed by worldly influences. Too apt many have been to fancy, that could such a leading man be brought over, his authority would prevail much ; so it would to make hypocrites, for those who would be prevailed upon by *his authority*, it is plain could not at the same time be prevailed upon by the power of the gospel. [Yes,] my friend, Christ is able to support his church ; he needs no human props to help him out ; when we look for them we distrust him, and when they have been gained, it hath been soon seen, that the strictness of Christian walking hath been quickly relaxed. But while we are eagerly looking for such worldly influences, do not we mean ourselves more than Christ ; to screen ourselves from the battering of tongues, and to save our interests which seem to be at stake ? I believe this is commonly the case ; and then I think we must be upon the brink of denying and renouncing Christ. Let us leave him to manage his own matters. All we have to do, is to do our duty without warping ; making no compliances with our own hearts. This I am sure we shall do if we be truly in the faith. Let me transcribe a passage of the sermon I have been just writing for the morrow. (2.) The second grace which accompanies faith is *love*. The believer

sees the heavens opened and Christ sitting at the right hand of God ; sees the wounds he freely endured for man's salvation, owns his available pleadings for sinners, confesses his dominion for ever and ever, and that in life, in death, at the judgment, and to all eternity, he is able to save. And what, hath he no esteem for, doth he set no value upon Christ ? Yes truly a higher value than upon the whole world or ten thousand worlds. Christ is to him all that he can want, and infinitely more. He would not be without Christ for all the dung and trash of the earth, for so he reckons every earthly thing in comparison of him ; nay he holds Jesus at so high a rate, that he cares not much what he be without, so he be not without him. To be without ease, wealth, reputation, liberty, life, this he can endure ; but he cannot endure to be without Christ. He hath [parted] and doth willingly part with any of these things for Christ ; he hath sold all to buy Christ. And why all this ? Truly he cannot do without him ; if he have not Christ, he is undone, he must perish everlastingly, he can never get free of sin and Satan, he is without peace and without hope. " To you who believe," saith St. Peter, " he is precious." It is faith sets the true value upon Christ. When a man believes in him, he *must* value him. That which makes a man believe in Christ, makes him value too the all-sufficiency of his power and love. Where faith is, there is spiritual marriage and unity, saith St. Paul, between the soul and Christ. The soul chooses him, setting her love upon him. The longer this marriage subsists, the nearer this

union grows, the better the soul is acquainted with Christ, so much the more pleased she is in him, so much the more abundantly she loves him. Is it an honest marriage in the sight of God, where there is a joining of hands and not of hearts? Such are all pretences to faith, where Christ is not valued, and loved, and preferred before the whole world.

If such hints may minister any comfort or courage, I shall heartily rejoice, being

Most affectionately yours,

S. W.

My heartiest love to the dear little Dr. His letter is very agreeable. I commend him to God's grace and his own prudence. He shall hear from me soon.

TO THE SAME IN DEEP AFFLICTION.

MY POOR DEAR FRIEND,

Yours indeed came near to me. It is the Lord, I said, and his ways must be mysterious to me, because I cannot fathom his infinite wisdom. They are good, though I see not how. The great difficulty is to believe them *his*. My dear friend, cry hard for that faith, that you may stedfastly believe it is the Lord's doing; unbelief does not allow that, and it is not so easy as we think to believe a providence; the most rather *suppose* than *believe* it, so they get no good by God's dispensations. Are you sure, unquestionably sure, that notwithstanding all second causes,

dear ——'s disorder is from God, and that every pang and every respite of it is by his immediate direction? Gain this point, I mean obtain it by grace, and you will be self-taught about the rest. You will see it a *loving correction*, and say, 'see God shews his kindness to me, and his displeasure at my sins;' so you will humble your soul. You will see it is a *special warning*, and say, 'is my interest in Christ clear? how stands my faith? and is it proved by love? You will see it is a *gracious preservative*, and say, 'my God saw my comforts to be dangerous, and so dashed this bitter potion into my cup.' You will see it is a *needful purgation*, and say, 'I wanted so severe a discipline to refine my graces and mortify my earthly affections.' Affliction cannot be received as it ought, unless we see God's hand in it, for without that, it can neither humble nor purify.

At such seasons, accusations of conscience are wont to add to the load. You must be sure to hear them, yet never to lose sight of Christ's righteousness; for Satan will be busy with your unbelief, and if yielded to, turn godly sorrow into undutiful despondency. It is alike faulty not to bear the rod, and to murmur against it.

The most trying circumstance in troubles is the uncertainty of the issue, and the delay of its coming. This puts faith and submission to the stretch in a peculiar manner, and is singularly mortifying to self-will. To be able to say, not only 'as thou wilt, but in what manner, and at what time thou wilt,' is what I earnestly beg the Lord to bestow upon you on this

pressing occasion. It will mightily stay your heart. I am persuaded that now you have a special occasion given you to honour your master, and to shew forth the power of his religion to his glory, by an exemplary exercise of the silent graces of meekness, quietness, and submission.

If dear Mrs. Rawlings be alive, as I will still hope in God she shall be restored to you, I need not tell you what to say to her. Only this I will say, endeavour to help the exercise of her faith in God through Jesus, by dropping a seasonable Scripture. If she have any doubts because of a low frame, or inability to pray or fix her thoughts, make her sensible that faith is deeper than these, and that in such a case it is the very office of faith to support her under and against them. Remember she wants help, and as is convenient, speak a promise to her.

O my dear friend, the Lord will make all work for your good. He is the kindest father, and the nearest friend. I commend you to him most importunately, being most affectionately,

Yours,

S. W.

TO THE SAME. A STRIKING DESCRIPTION OF THE ENMITY OF MAN'S HEART TO GOD, AND OF THE WORKINGS OF THE POWER BY WHICH ALONE IT CAN BE SUBDUED.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,

I am glad to catch a moment's leisure, and to employ it in writing to you. Let me speak with-

out particular design, and apply it if you are able. What do I find within me? Principles most unreasonable, neither directing me to God, nor consequently to happiness. Principles which have debased my understanding to an aptitude only for the mean regards of the world. Principles which tend alone to gratify something in me I call *self*; a monster that ungodly God, and will have the whole of creation at its command; a haughty monster, big with self-sufficiency; a monster that knows neither pity nor gratitude, pregnant with envy, rage, revenge, that bears intent of murder to every opposing man or woman, a lazy monster which would have all nature sacrifice to its indulgence. Principles, atheistical because self-idolatrous; which deny the blessed God to have either justice, mercy, holiness, wisdom, or truth; which confront his superintendence and government with the most determined hatred; which demand an eternal separation from every thing that is called God, because they cannot endure submission, and the thought of parting from the present scene. Miraculous love divine sees and pities such a wretch. Grace infinite interposes to rescue me, however unwilling to be delivered, restored, made happy. I see and approve the sufficient contrivance that reconciles such a God to such a monster; that inspires the glorious principles of liberty, the only liberty, that of serving God. Man, a creature, must be a servant: how much better to serve the Most High, than to be a slave to lust! That gives me eyes to see this my deformity of heart, to lament this my misery; that

furnishes me with an arm to overmatch this accursed God-dishonouring *flesh*. But how hard to apply this remedy ! Either I seem not to want it, or I dispute its sufficiency, when I discern my helplessness. When I have taken it to me a moment, and am pleased with my deliverance, suddenly it is gone ; the inbred monster awakes, scatters darkness over my eyes, disputes, contends, insists on gratification ; the pleasing scene is departed, I am confusion, I am robbed of peace ; I startle, and would return to God and comfort, but intercepting objects step in between, or unbelieving suspicion makes my darkness greater. I reflect what I am ; I look in and charge my native corruption ; I complain to God ; he sets me free, but I am not safe a moment, and expect the clouds again.

Happy the case of those who are gone to the better country ! For this happy above all, they have dropt the flesh in the grave ! Why then shrink at death, when death only can make my freedom perfect, unchangeable, eternal ! Ah ! faithless flesh still hangs upon me. Come Jesus deliver me now, give me this freedom, that I may long to be free indeed and for ever. I do not know what you will make of this rhapsody, but I love to write to you at my ease, being sincerely,

Yours,

S. W.

The solemn views entertained by Mr. Walker of the ministerial office, and how seriously he urged

them upon others, may be seen in the subjoined extracts from his letters of advice to a young man just about to take orders. “I remember,” he says, “the week before my ordination, I spent with the other candidates, as dissolute, I fear, as myself, in a very light indecent manner, dining, supping, drinking, and laughing together, when God knows we should have been on our knees, and warning each other to fear for our souls, in the view of what we were to put our hands to. I cannot but attribute the many careless ungodly years I have spent in pleasure since, to this profane introduction; and believe me, dear Sir, the review shocks me:—while I write, I tremble in the recollection of the wounds I then gave Jesus. Were I to pass that awful transaction again, I hope it would, I am sure it would be in a very different manner. I would be, as much as possible, alone in prayer and humiliation. If I could find none deeply impressed with the ordination, I would have nothing to do with them; or if I could find any, I should still take care to be mostly alone. I would, again and again, pray over many passages of Scripture relating to the ministerial office, particularly the epistles to Timothy and Titus, and also the ordination offices, both of them; I would pass two days of the week fasting; I would commit to paper all my present views, that I might after have recourse to them. I would seek to obtain the most distinct and lively impressions of the importance of the ministerial office to God, myself, and others; in short, I would do nothing the whole week, but what would dispose me,

with all seriousness, sincerity, and heartiness, so to undertake the office, as I should wish I had done when standing before the judgment. I would therefore recommend such a conduct to you, and would observe that your steadiness herein, in opposition to the reproaches it may bring upon you, and the risings of shame in your own heart contending for compliance, will be the best proof you can have of faith, and a happy ground of hope that you will not afterwards be ashamed of the gospel, when you shall be an ambassador for Christ. The case will be the very reverse, if you comply."

What appeared to him to be of more immediate moment, for the consideration of one just about to receive authority to become a messenger of Jesus Christ, he comprised "under these three points."

"1. A right sense of the importance of your office—as it regards Christ who honours you with so distinguished a station in his church, and commits to you, in so interesting a degree, the care of his gospel, which will be abundantly disgraced, or as you may reasonably hope, be glorified through you, as you are faithful or otherwise. The titles which will belong to you as a minister, do awfully display this. The Scriptures term you 'a servant of Christ'—'a watchman'—'a steward'—'a shepherd'—'an ambassador,' &c.; titles which greatly shew, if duly considered and attended to in the full scope of what such expressions signify, how much Christ entrusts with you,—as it regards the souls to whom you shall minister, and the whole church of Christ, as far as your influence shall

reach. The souls of the people, especially your own, will be in an awakening connection with your diligence, faithfulness, exemplariness. Your own people at least will hearken to none but you : for the most part they will depend entirely upon you ; and if you feed them not with the true word of life, if you be backward to stir them up out of their dead sleep of security, and to promote and forward them with all readiness and diligence, they will even be content to perish ; and in such a case you cannot too seriously consider at whose hands their blood will reasonably and certainly be required,—as your own soul is concerned in it ; and this it is ultimately, for the ministry will be your calling, and what you must be accountable for at the day of judgment. God grant that you may be able so to demean yourself, that you may be able to say on that day, ‘ I am free from the blood of all men.’ But it is a thought deeply to be weighed, that the sin of unfaithfulness in a minister, (and unfaithful he may be and quite beside his office, though a very decent sober man) will then appear with these three terrible aggravations—that he hath neglected his calling—that he hath signally betrayed the interests of the Redeemer’s kingdom—that he hath been the great instrument of the ruin of very many souls ; indeed he shall hardly think how many that day will reveal.

“ 2. A due consideration of what your conduct must be, if you will be a faithful minister. Your conduct will regard your preaching and example.—As to preaching, taking it in a large sense, as reaching to all

your ministrations of the word, whether public or private, it will only be needful at present that you be determined to preach nothing but God's word, i. e. what you believe in your conscience, after the most simple inquiry you have been able to make into God's mind in the Scriptures, and what you will be contented, as far as you see, to rest your own soul upon. This may seem easy to resolve upon at first view; but indeed it is no easy matter so to have our hearts disinterested to our own reasonings, and those of others, as simply to be willing that God should teach us, and others by us. As, for example, you are to go before others in all manner of Christian godliness, of which you must be the great promoter, support, and encouragement; especially in the whole of your conduct, you must shew others what it is to live by faith, letting them see there is a power in the religion you teach them, which sets a man above the world, and brings down something of heaven upon earth. But most signally must you endeavour to lead them, by your example, to renounce the devil, world, and flesh. They must see you, not seeking the favour of the rich and great, not courting esteem by any wrong compliances, nor desirous of praise by what you are doing, which is to renounce the devil. They must see you above a covetous, worldly temper; that you are not anxious about getting preferment; that you seek not theirs but them, cheerfully waiting on Providence for a subsistence, and in the choice of a place where you are to minister, considering rather where you may do most good, than where you may get most money.

Then, as to the flesh, you must set them an example of temperance in meat and drink, and recreation. You must teach them industry, by not indulging a slothful way of life in any thing; and sobriety, by not mixing with them in their sinful pleasures, and by withdrawing from all company where is excess."

" 3. How you are disposed to your office in both these views of it. It is plain, that such is the importance of the office, and that such a ministerial conduct ought to be. You will try your heart, whether, God helping you, you are desirous to engage in it, such as it is. If the answer of your conscience on your knees before God be, that you are willing and ready, it will be a great encouragement to you; and you may answer that you verily believe you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to undertake it."

A friend desired his sentiments upon the important point of the inward call to the ministry, as applied in the solemn question just alluded to—"Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this office and ministration, to serve God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people." He replied to his inquiries, by the subjoined invaluable letter.

DEAR SIR,

I knew not how I could so effectually give you my sentiments upon that interesting matter to us both, *the inward call to the ministry*, as by bringing my heart under examination upon it, and communi-

cating to you what I found the real state of my case. Yourself will find, I doubt not, a good end answered by pursuing the same course. And I cannot but wish all my brethren might, at proper times, engage in the like inquiry.

Concerning my outward commission, there is no question, having been regularly ordained a minister in the Church of England. But concerning the being inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon me this ministry, I should inquire wherein the inward special call to the ministry doth consist.

For determining this, besides considering the case of the great preachers in the Old and New Testament, it is evident to me from the reason of the thing, that those who are inwardly called to the ministry,—

1. Should be led particularly to attend to, and observe the necessities of the people about them.
2. That seeing the want there is of it, they should be effectually inclined to preach God's most holy word to them.
3. That the sole end they have in view, should be the glory of God, in preaching his word for the recovery and salvation of their neighbours, or of others, wheresoever Providence shall call them.
- And, 4. That they should be so determined for this work, as not to be deterred from it by any apprehension of danger, want, or reproach, foreseen and expected in general.

A disposition for the work of the ministry, circumstanced in this manner, is plainly needful for the due undertaking and discharge of the ministerial office; and whoever knows his own corrupted heart, and the distastefulness of the

word of God, to a gain-saying and sin-loving world, will readily ascribe such a disposition to the Holy Ghost.

Here, then, the matter lies before me, and it behoves me to make diligent search. The point is of the last importance, not only to my own soul, but to the souls of others, as well as to the honour of God. I desire to seek into it; with a strong sense upon my mind, that nothing in time or eternity is of so much consequence to me.

“ Was I inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, when I undertook the ministry ? ”

1. *Was I led particularly to attend to and observe, the necessities of the people about me ?*

As I was ignorant of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, and of my want of Him in all his offices, so I had not taken the least notice of the spiritual state of others. It was to me, as a thing I had no concern with, that sins of the grossest kinds were committing on every side of me. And after I was ordained, I had no light or thought of the condition my parishioners were in, though I had some desire that they should come to church and sacrament, and not drink, swear, and the like.

2. *In the view of the people's wants, was I led, and effectually inclined to preach the word of God to them ?*

Having no view of the people's real wants concerning their souls, this could not be a principle inclining me to preach the gospel to them. I had not any inclination, arising from views of usefulness to others,

disposing me to undertake the ministry ; nor, indeed, any other concern about the matter of preaching, than that I must do it some how or other, as a *Sunday's* task. I remember, that the day I was ordained deacon, my conscience was something alarmed and forced me to this resolution, that I would endeavour to do my duty as a clergyman ; but my thoughts were altogether confused, and it lasted then the ordination hour only, though at seasons afterwards, I found the like remonstrances, which drove me to something like diligence, the short time they were upon me.

3. *Was the sole end I had before me the glory of God, in preaching his word for the recovery and salvation of the people about me, or others ?*

It is most evident, from the former considerations, and I am fully convinced of it as a certain fact, I had not any such thing in view. The ends engaging me to go into the ministry were, that my friends designed me for it, that therein I should get a livelihood at least ; but I was most particularly pleased with this thought, that when I had passed the examinations, and was once ordained, I should be out of all restraint, might do as I liked, and be my own master.

4. *Was I so determined upon this work, that I was not to be deterred from it by any apprehension of danger, want, or reproach, which I foresaw or expected in general ?*

I had not the slightest apprehension, that any of these things were likely to come upon me, so ignorant was I of the nature of man and of the gospel. I

had never observed any such thing falling upon the clergy wherever I had been. I dreamt of no danger, feared not want, and concerning reproach, it was far from my thoughts; I doubted not I should make such an appearance as to get the esteem and praise of the world, and truly, had I gone on as I begun, living vainly, preaching smooth things, and not setting myself to the work in earnest, I had lived and died without suspicion, that a minister of the gospel in the Church of England should run any hazard of reproach, or worse, for preaching her doctrines, and labouring to lead his people into the practice of them.

After the most attentive review, I must freely own my case was no other nor better than this. Wherefore, I see not the least shadow of ground to suppose "I was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to undertake the ministry." For this my most sinful presumption, and for my after behaviour, in many succeeding years, confirming that God had not sent me, I ought to be low in the dust the remainder of my days.

But have I been since moved by the Holy Ghost to the work of the ministry?

My dear friend, assist me with your prayers, that I may be satisfied in a point so nearly connected with all my hopes, and that God may graciously supply what is wanting to make me an able minister of the New Testament, a faithful steward of the mysteries of God. If I am not moved by the Holy Ghost to the work I am engaged in, I shall do nothing as I ought;

I shall bring the ruin of others upon my guilty head, be overcome by worldly fears, seduced by worldly interests, and sacrifice to my own praise. I shall be without courage to stand in the gap against prevailing iniquity, and to use every measure conducive to the establishment and increase of my master's kingdom. Unwilling, therefore, to be deceived, while also I would not deny the gift of God, permit me to lay before you what I can discern relative to my present dispositions towards my ministerial office, and that by going over again the several questions just proposed.

1. *Have I been led particularly to attend to and observe the necessities of the people about me?*

In some degree I have ; and what I see, has given me much concern. I see the number of real Christians small. I see that the form of godliness has been thrusting out the power of it, till itself is well nigh lost in licentiousness. I see the generality dead in sin, and sleeping securely in a profound ignorance of the truth of the gospel. I see the ministry in general, long ago fallen into a dry, moral way of preaching, that can neither reach the disease of the hearers, nor has the promise of the Spirit to accompany it. And I earnestly wish I saw none of those who have undertaken that sacred office, so engaged in ambitious and self-interested pursuits, that they have neither leisure nor inclination, nor ability to go through the ministerial duties. In general, I see God forgotten, Christ neglected or despised, and the kingdom of darkness extensively established.

2. *In these views have I been, and am I effectually inclined to preach the Gospel?*

I trust it has been so with me for a season. Surely I have some desire that the gospel should be known and obeyed, and souls be saved. I would be engaged in this service. I think the ministerial work my indispensable duty. I choose and prefer it. On no consideration would I quit it. Blessed be God, that I can thus answer with any degree of confidence. The reflection ought to inspire me with all gratitude, whilst I ought also to be exceedingly ashamed of my coldness and lukewarmness in, and to the honourable labour, of my being no more animated to spend and be spent in the cause of Jesus and of souls.

3. *Is the sole end before me, the glory of God in preaching his word, for the recovery and salvation of the people around me, and others?*

I cannot discern that I have regard to preferment or interest. Honour or advantage seem to have no weight with me, to engage a single wish for a situation wherein I might have more of either. I desire to leave the destination of my place of service entirely to God, and to lie upon his hands for a maintenance. Yet I find my heart would be hankering after esteem. But I see, lament, and disallow its sacrilegious suggestions, and I am satisfied the prospect of getting reputation is not what moves me to preach the gospel. I dare not say my aim is simple and pure, that nothing alloys it; nevertheless, I must believe, because experience has proved it to me, that the interest of religion is the prevailing object.

4. *Am I determined upon this work, in despite of all discouragements?*

Warm resolutions cannot decide this. The case of the great Apostle St. Peter teaches me to have no dependance upon them. From observations of what is past, I shall make the safest judgment of my real steadfastness, and how far I may depend upon any purpose of going on in the face of discouragement.

Timid by constitution, and my heart fond of keeping the esteem of men, I have, since the time when I first preached God's word to an adulterous generation, found innumerable and many times very painful searchings of heart. Fear and pride did not allow me to do any thing without making formidable remonstrances, and have kept me, perhaps may do so to this day, from acting up to what I ought. However, from the first, wherever I saw duty, they could never prevail with me to decline it. Neither have they been able to fix a thought upon me of yielding anything, or of taking the least step for bringing down Christ to the humours, fashions, and maxims of the world.

Besides which, their remonstrances have been insensibly blunting, and they have been pleading with less frequency and power. May I be safe on this side, I have less reason to fear that any thing on the quarter of interest, shall be able to deter me from faithfully preaching the gospel.

Thus have I opened myself freely, and shall rejoice if the perusal of my case, be a means of

communicating to you either light or heat. Favour me with your observations, and believe me,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

S. W.¹

Mr. Walker's view of the motives which should guide patrons of livings in the disposal of their preferment, will form a suitable appendage to these observations on the ministry. He wrote to a person who applied to him for advice upon a question connected with this most serious duty, "The point wherein you would have my opinion is of a very particular nature, and I will give you the best light into it I am able. It is plain at first sight, that the cure of souls is a distinct thing from the tithes of a parish, by which the minister is supported in his office; and it is as plain, that in all conscience the thing to be regarded is the cure, not the tithes. From whence I am sure you will have no question, that as a minister ought principally to respect the care of souls in accepting, so the patron should have regard only to the fitness of the minister in nominating to parishes. But interest hath carried it away on the one part and the other, so that that which is the

¹ This Letter found its way into the *Practical Christianity*, a most appropriate situation. The statements made in it by Mr. Walker, afford additional confirmation of the melancholy view truth has obliged me take, of the spiritual condition of the worldly clergy in his day.

one thing needful in the taking and naming to livings is little regarded. But, however, as the right of presenting a worthy minister is a valuable and desirable thing, so to sell or purchase that right is very justifiable. I do not see upon any other views the buying or selling livings can be justifiable, because in any other view interest must be preferred to the care of souls. I will suppose, now, you patron of a living not yet vacant ; if you sell it, you do not prostitute the nominating a worthy clergyman to your interest, because, though you may have one in your eye, yet you have not at present a power of nominating him, and before you should, he or you may be dead, and the person to whom you should sell it might have one as worthy to present ; besides, that to be scrupulous about this looks like caring for tomorrow. But suppose the living vacant, then you have the very power in your hand, for the sake of which only the right patronage can be justly valuable, viz. the right of presenting a worthy clergyman. Now if you sell, you forego this ; you betray your trust, and must own that it can only be for the sake of your interest. Your business was to present the most worthy minister you could find ; no doubt God expected you so to do, seeing the power of presenting he had put into your hands ; instead of which you transferred that right to another, who might present you could not say whom. In short, whenever a living becomes vacant, God and conscience call upon the patron to do his duty, and to present the worthy minister. And if by any worldly respects or heed-

lessness, or whatever other cause, one unworthy be presented, upon whom can the blame be chargeable, but that patron who did not discharge his trust? Upon this footing I think you may defend yourself against the whole world, and be able to confound the sophistry of lawyers, the iniquity of custom, and prescription of authority. But if you move off from this plain conscientious state of the case, they will quickly puzzle you. Tell them, therefore, you know nothing of acts, constitutions, nor canons; but this you are assured, that you are now called upon to present the most worthy clergyman you can find, and that, if you are not allowed to do this, you cannot in conscience do any thing." Well would it be for the cause of Christ, and for the interests of the Church, if all to whom God has committed the solemn trust of patronage, were influenced by views of their responsibility similar to those of Mr. Walker. That his advice was honest, we have a proof in his own conduct with regard to pluralities, and in the conscientious feeling which rendered him content and happy in the lowest grade of his profession, though no man could be more deserving of advancement. The patron who appoints an inefficient minister, whether he does it intentionally for interest on the one hand, or unwittingly through negligence on the other, robs God of his glory, which the man he nominates should maintain, hinders the public benefit for which all public offices are designed, deprives some meritorious individual of his due reward, and takes from piety the honour which is its proper encourage-

ment. Such is the complication of evils involved in every unworthy appointment to a cure of souls.

In addition to his general advice, Mr. Walker knew how to administer relief to minds suffering from excitement or cast down by despair. The following instance manifests consummate skill in dealing with the most difficult cases, as well as great accuracy of thought and wisdom. His friend Mr. Adam had been applied to for comfort and direction, by a female under great mental agitation from a persuasion that her "day of grace was past," which filled her with the bitterest despondency. Sometimes she was seized with fits of laughter, succeeded by an awful propensity to give blasphemous utterance to the dreadful thoughts which entered her mind. Her miserable sensations "cost her thousands of tears," and she tried to pray in vain. There appeared no way of relief, and she opened her secret feelings to Mr. Adam, that he might advise her for her benefit, and pray for her deliverance from the power of what she verily believed to be an evil spirit. From him she met with that sympathy and comfort which the grace of God inspires. He not only wrote to her himself, but he laid the affair before Mr. Walker, who at his request gave his opinion in the following concise but powerful manner.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

DEAR SIR,

You desire my sentiments on the within case, which is very pitiable. I pray God any thing I have to say may be instrumental to her relief. For these eight years past, I have scarcely past a month without being applied to by some one or other in like circumstances with the poor woman within, some of whom have been nearly drove out of their senses, and others to such extremities as it may be prudent to conceal. All have been exceedingly backward to open their case, as supposing it without example; nor have any declared themselves upon it, till forced to do so by the depth of their distress. Yet I have the comfort to assure you (which may be some relief to this woman) that all of them without exception have soon been made easy by the following method; and one especially, whose case was without comparison more dreadful than hers, is now a rejoicing Christian in London. The method pursued has been this—(1) To convince the conscience that the person into whose mind these horrible thoughts are injected by the Devil, is guilty of no sin by means of such suggestions. When this has been made appear to the full satisfaction of the person hunted by them, the main difficulty has been got over; and therefore it has been needful to lay out the main pains on this point, and to repeat again and again the arguments upon which they may be

satisfied. Satisfied they will often appear, while the force of the conviction is upon them ; but then they are apt to lose it soon, and will need the charitable assistance of some Christian friend (who should be experienced in the thing, which few are) to bring back upon their minds such conviction. The method used for convincing such unhappy persons of their not sinning because of such suggestions, has been to represent to them the injection cast into the mind of Christ in his temptations, “fall down and worship me—” where no one can conceive Christ was guilty of any sin thereby—to demand of the persons from what Scriptures they had concluded such suggestions to be their sins ; and seeing they had none to produce, that their taking them for their sins was but a delusion of Satan, taking advantage of their ignorance—and to explain to them the difference between sin and temptation. If the conscience be thus satisfied, it only remains (2) To direct to a right temper of mind under such temptations, which is by no means a restless desire of deliverance, but submission and a patient waiting upon the will of the Lord. In measure as this resigned temper has been obtained, Satan has lost his end and very soon departed.

On the whole they have been thus brought not to be terrified when such suggestions are darted upon them, but to possess their minds in peace, to be afraid of murmuring and self will, never to recal in prayer by way of confession what they have not been guilty of, and to seek light and patience, rather than deliverance.

As the enemy sometimes takes occasion, by means of bodily disorders thus to torment serious but ignorant persons ; and otherwise, as such distress of mind is apt to bring on bodily disorders, the assistance of physic should be taken in, and to it should be added the duties of the calling, for nothing gives more advantage in this case than idleness.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours affectionately in Christ,

S. WALKER.

The poor afflicted woman was afterwards brought to a happy recovery, as appears from the following letter addressed to her by Mr. Adam.

Mrs.——

I am thankful to God for your recovery, and hope you will have cause to say, “ it is good for me that I have been in trouble.” If you have the grace given you to make a right use of your afflictions, you will bless God for his fatherly care over you, and find that you could not have been without them. We are all for ease and satisfaction in the way of a worldly life ; but he sees this would undo us, and is often forced to cut deep to work a cure. Your troubles have been great, but ordained to you in weight and measure ; and you cannot but be sensible that it is impossible for God to be mistaken in what he does. You know from Scripture, that his chastisements are proofs of his love. Receive them as such, with prayer for submission to his blessed will ; and however grievous

they may seem for a time, depend upon it they will end happily. I mean chiefly in eternity. Let that be your steady aim, and then you will be contented to let God prepare you for it in his own way. You say you can now thank him with your heart, as well as with your tongue. Why, is not this a blessed effect of suffering? Only be sure that you thank him for it, as well as for the present ease he gives you from it. For this is what he is working us to in all he does, that we may receive his will, purely because it is his will, without a murmuring thought or any choice of our own. I know this is a hard lesson; but what cannot God teach us, if we put ourselves into his hands? If we do not learn more of it, it is because we keep ourselves from him in our own wills.

I persuade myself you are so well grounded in the way of Christian salvation, as to know, “that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and that he is the propitiation for our sins”—that faith gives us an interest in all he did and suffered—and that wherever this faith is, it “worketh by love, purifies the heart, and maketh us new creatures.” I pray God bring you to the happy experience of this, and confirm you in it, and am

Your assured friend and servant,

T. A.

These specimens of wise and affectionate pastoral counsel, cannot fail to be of service to young clergymen who may desire to profit by them. Nothing is more important in the entire circle of ministerial

duty, than skill to meet the various states of mind which present themselves in private intercourse with the people. When a minister considers that he is appointed to the varied work of confirming the truth—refuting error—reproving sin—instructing, exhorting, consoling and strengthening his flock, it will be evident to him that his most arduous duties yet remain, when he has descended from the pulpit. There he scatters the seed, but when it springs up, he is responsible for its advancement and fruitfulness.

He must therefore, like Mr. Walker, mark the changing aspects of the mind under different circumstances of religious experience, and learn to administer to them all. He must also like him, seek acquaintance with his own heart, and be convinced that all effectual teaching is the result, not of the arts of nature, but of the wisdom of the spirit of grace.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. WALKER'S TOUR.—CAUSE OF HIS LEAVING HOME.—PERPLEXITIES ABOUT THE BURIAL SERVICE, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES.—HE VISITS MR. ADAM.—INCIDENTS ON HIS JOURNEY.—INTERCOURSE WITH PIOUS DISSENTERS.—REMARKS.

MR. WALKER'S TOUR.

IN the autumn of 1757, Mr. Walker made a series of visits to his distant friends. He would perhaps not have determined to set out upon a tour, his health rendered almost essential to him, if a circumstance recorded in the following letter to Mr. Adam had not driven him from home to seek an interview with his diocesan. What he wrote from Exeter on the cause of his absence from Truro, will best shew the reasons of his journey, and the sensitive state of his overstrained mind at that period.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

Exeter, Oct. 17, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

I had wrote a part of a long letter, which is now left behind, as I am myself on the way towards you. I could have wished indeed a matter of less moment had called me away ; but as it is, I greatly need your advice and consolation. The occasion is this. Near a year ago, a gentleman died, who had been unhappily profane, destroyed himself with drink, and went out of the world without any signs of repentance. I could not in conscience use those words of the burial office concerning him—"As our hope is this our brother doth." The matter was soon sent to the Bishop, who gave me a smart reprimand for omitting them. So that matter rested. About ten days ago his companion indeed, rather the worst of the two, was taken off also, with this difference only, that he was not, as I can learn, properly in his senses in his whole sickness. Here I was brought into a worse plunge. I dared not read those words, yet thought I had no right to alter, and that on that head I had acted wrong in the former case. So, determined to make my mind easy at all events, I told his friends I could not bury him, and recommended to them the getting some other clergyman, which I thought it was not honest for me to do myself. Those who seek occasion against me, thought they had now found it, but it pleased God to make

their impetuosity to do me hurt, the very means of preserving me from any damage; for they did not bring the corpse to the church stile, but hurried it away to a neighbouring church, which, indeed, they were forced in some sort to do, if they intended to make any thing of it against me, because my brother Penrose was providentially come to town an hour before the time assigned for the funeral, and repeatedly sent word that he was ready to do the office. What this may come to, besides a deal of noise, and indeed rage, I know not: but am told I have nothing to fear. However, the worst lies behind. Casting in my mind the case of this man, I was led to look farther, and to consider, that there are many in the town whose case is notoriously contrary to the design of the burial office, many customary drunkards, &c. who make no profession by coming to the Lord's table, the most of them having never been there in their lives. This, I confess, has raised many startling thoughts upon me. If I cannot bury them, I cannot stay at Truro. But will the matter be clear elsewhere? I have taken the part, therefore, to seek light, how the office can be used to impenitent sinners so dying. I have consulted all the writers to no purpose, who seem to smooth it over in a way not satisfactory to me. I have wrote the Bishop, told him my case, and am now on the way to consult him personally. Depend upon it, I shall do nothing rashly, and whatever I do, with all possible secresy, that I may not stumble any of my brethren. It will go near me to leave my dear people, and the work at Truro; but,

unless I can be made easy in doing it myself, or can get that matter devolved on an assistant, it will be impossible for me to continue there. Indeed, if my doubts remain, I can serve nowhere, except as a principal, with an assistant under me (who may not have the same doubts that I have), or where I can be employed as a lecturer. It would be a dreadful thing to lay aside my ministry.

Now, my dear Sir, I am so far in my way to the Bishop's, at Bath; after consulting him, I shall set forward by Oxford to Northampton to Mr. Hervey, in my way to you, whom God willing, I am determined to see, could it be with your convenience, at Northampton (where you will hear of me, if you come, at Dr. Stonehouse's) unless you should think it best for me to see also your archdeacon, or Lord D.'s be any where near you, whom I am obliged to pay my duty to, and whom I know not how to wait upon without your introduction. I shall not possibly reach Northampton till Wednesday sennight, by which time I may hope to find at least a letter from you at Dr. Stonehouse's, directing me what I must do.

You will excuse, I know, all the trouble I give you, especially in a matter of so much importance to myself, and perhaps others. I know not how much I am obliged to you; and the length of my journey will speak how much I esteem you.

S. WALKER.

This letter contains the true version of an anecdote, which has probably been hitherto somewhat incor-

rectly told. It was adverted to with some observations, in the first edition of this memoir; but here we have the advantage of knowing the exact state of the case, from Mr. Walker's own pen. He certainly did well to consult Mr. Adam on the important question, but the precise nature of his opinion we have no means of knowing. That he did give advice, appears from a letter written by Mr. Walker, after his return to Truro, which also contains an account of some of the consequences of Mr. Walker's resolution. As it will soon come before the reader, it is left to speak for itself. Exemplary as this excellent pastor was in the general discharge of his duty, it is impossible to deny that here it would be most improper to imitate him. To act as he did would be, generally speaking, to sit in the seat of judgment, and to assume to ourselves the Lord's prerogative, who alone knows, as he alone determines, the state of any human being after death. How far the Saviour may be revealed in the moment of dissolution to the expiring sinner, and who may be selected as a wondrous monument of infinite mercy, it is not for us to say. The living only are the objects of pastoral solicitude; we have no concern with the dead. Hence, our reformers have framed our services to the *supposed* case of a Christian, throughout the entire series, leaving it to God, and not to the priest, to determine the individuals to whom they are personally applicable.

By his conduct in this unhappy affair, Mr. Walker not only unsettled himself with regard to his cure, but also raised injurious fears in the breasts of his

friends, and excited doubts as to his steady adherence to the Church of England. How much this was felt, appears from a letter, written to Mr. Adam by Mr. Penrose, during the absence of Mr. Walker. It is as follows.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

Cornwall, Penryn, Oct. 31, 1757.

REV. SIR,

Not known to you, nor knowing you but by your excellent Lectures, and a few letters which my good friend Mr. Walker hath communicated, I venture, however, to apply to you in a case of all things most interesting to this neighbourhood.

Mr. Walker is gone a journey eastward, and purposed at his departure to see you ere he return. You will have from his own mouth an account of his late refusal, through a conscientious scruple, to read the burial office over the corpse of a heathenish fellow of Truro, and of the confusion that town is in, consequent thereupon. I have only to mention, that it is currently reported and credited by many, who wish well to Mr. Walker, that he hath expressed some thoughts of settling no more at Truro, nor of taking any other cure, but of prosecuting his ministry among the protestant dissenters. From my own acquaintance and conversation with him, I have ever taken him to be well affected to the Church of England; nor have I any grounds to suspect otherwise now,

more than common fame, which I am very sensible is commonly a liar. But liars sometimes speak truth; and should that be the case now, it is natural to apprehend that a deep wound will be given to the cause of Christ thereby, at least throughout Cornwall. Mr. Walker has some friends among the dissenters, whom he will visit in his tour, that would compass sea and land to gain such a proselyte; but I am satisfied he will pay the utmost deference to your advice, and, therefore, I take the liberty to hint the matter to you, that you may prevent by a seasonable statement, what afterwards it would be impossible to remedy.

Mr. Mitchel, the Vicar of Verian, a valuable friend to Mr. Walker and me, approves of my writing to you on this occasion, joins with me in prayers for you, and yours, and all under your ministry, and equally with myself, will be obliged to you for the favour of a line in answer to this letter, directed to,

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate Brother,

And most obedient Servant,

JOHN PENROSE.

To this letter Mr. Adam replied,

To the Rev. John Penrose.

Nov. 11, 1757.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Your favour of Oct. 31st did not come to hand till Nov. 8th, a few hours after Mr. Walker

had left me. If I had received it while he was here, I should hardly have known how to mention the contents of it to him, as I had no authority from you for so doing.

In the last letter I had from him, he expressed an apprehension that he might be driven from his ministry at Truro ; but neither then nor here, gave the least hint of his going over to the dissenters, which I think his sincerity would have led him to do, nay and to have opened himself fully upon it to me, if he had any such design. I am persuaded the thought is far from his heart. I am greatly mistaken if he is not firmly attached to the Church of England, and dare be confident that he will never give such a blow to the interests of it, as his desertion would be. I should be as sorry in that case as you, but believe the report of it is entirely groundless, and nothing but the *clamour* of his adversaries, who are wishing for such a handle to reproach him. Doubtless when you see him, you will tell him in friendship what you have heard, and will then be able to discern whether he has any leaning that way. If you should discover that he has, I beg the favour of you to communicate the grounds of your supposition immediately to me ; though I cannot help thinking that he will never take such a step without giving me the earliest notice of it himself. Your opinion of my Lectures is but too pleasing to me. I wish it may be an incitement to further usefulness.

My dear Sir, I embrace you and Mr. M. with brotherly love. God bless you both in your hearts

and ministry. Press on through good report, and evil report. You know Christ's wages here; but you know too what they will be hereafter. You are happy in the acquaintance and example of Mr. Walker. He can hardly be more in my heart than he was before; but I know he has left a new load of guilt upon me, if I am not the better for having seen him. I am, with great respect and esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate Brother and Servant,

T. ADAM.

Mr. Walker, as is clearly proved by a letter to Mr. Adam in the next chapter, never entertained the slightest intention of deserting the Church of England, and his refusal to read the Burial Service in the case which gave rise to the report mentioned in Mr. Penrose's letter, arose only from that scrupulous and tender conscientiousness, which marked and generally shed a lustre on the actions of his life. He was also at this time rendered peculiarly sensitive, by the nervousness of a frame shaken by his arduous and unremitted exertions. On his return to Truro he wrote the following letter to Mr. Adam, in which he gives a description of his tour, and makes allusion to the subject of the funeral which had raised so much clamour.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

Dec. 8th, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

After an absence of seven weeks and two days, it pleased a merciful God to bring me safely to this place again on Saturday last. I wrote you from Oxford. My next stay was at Bristol two days, partly on Mr. Burnet's account, and partly for the sake of conversing more at large with our brethren there. There was some room to hope our meeting was not in vain; the rather, because Mr. Hart of Warminster, a very sensible and pious man, was with us at my request, and by agreement, on our coming forward to you. They seem, I think, sensible of no other faith than John Wesley's, the mistake and unscriptural foundation of which, I had frequent occasion to speak of; I hope in some sort, to the clearing up of the matter in their minds. After laying a foundation for further intercourse, I left them and got to Bridgewater, Nov. 26th.; there I found an old Oxford acquaintance, with whom I spent the next day (Sunday) being detained by the waters, which were swollen so as to render the roads dangerous. There I heard the most unchristian morality I ever met with, advanced in the morning, and was desired to preach in the afternoon, which I willingly undertook, being big with compassion over a poor careless people, dead in sin, and covered with Egyptian darkness. My address was to them as

sinners, declaring the wrath of God to be hanging over their heads. There was much attention at least, and this consequence, that it brought a noted infidel to me to dispute the matter. My conversation as well as sermon, put him quite off his bias, and left him I think uneasy. My next step was to Darracot's,¹ the Monday, with whom I must pass that day. He is an honest-hearted creature, and has been remarkably successful. We spent the evening with a considerable number of his humble, modest people. I have not seen much of the power of Godliness among the dissenters, except here. Thursday brought me to Miss ———'s, where we remembered you, and I communicated your advice. She grows daily, and is indeed a great pattern of zeal and prudence. Her conscience is remarkably tender, and her constitutional temper low; so she wants evangelical means statedly, and is determined to have them in no long time. On my arrival here, I find I have been banished, silenced, preferred, married, as the whim of conjecture varied! But after all I do not find I am prosecuted; *ὁ ἐπίσκοπος* did not care to go so far, and so I believe the thing is dropt. As I purpose putting your advice in practice, there will be soon a new handle. I had yesterday a little compliment paid me by the chancellor of the diocese, the Bishop's son-in-law, who has lessened my income some pounds a year, by striking my name out of the list of surro-

¹ A most excellent Dissenting Minister, of whom more hereafter.

gates that distribute licences. Here I am, deserving infinitely more than I do or can suffer in this world, greatly needing correction, and I hope somewhat blessed in deadness to the world, and compassion for souls under it. Last evening, I met my dear people at the society. The substance of our entertainment is enclosed. The season was to me greatly delightful, and somewhat quickening.

But what is become of Mr. Burnet? He came with me as far as Bristol, where a title for him reached us in the diocese of Canterbury. We judged it best he should return to London first, to try if our Bishop might be prevailed upon to authenticate his testimonial, so that he might get orders from the Bishop of Wells (now in London) and fix at Bath; but if that failed, then that he might apply to the Archbishop upon his title in Kent, and so obtain a hearing without the form of accusation. In the former it is now too plain he will not succeed, as Lady Coningsby, the principal person on whom we depended, says it will be in vain to apply. What friends it may please God to raise to him with the Archbishop, or how God may dispose *his* heart we know not. But if both fail, it will be a hard case with poor Mr. Burnet, and some other employment must be found for him till his way be open into the ministry. We know nothing he can employ himself in but a school, for assisting in which he is peculiarly well qualified. Or think you a scheme might be fallen upon to support him at College till he could get orders? We must attempt something elsewhere for him, because, through the

opposition made to us here, Mr. Conon's school is reduced so low, that it neither needs nor will maintain an assistant. But concerning all this, you shall hear from me farther, as soon as we see the issue of the present attempts.

I bear upon my heart a very grateful remembrance of the kindness shewed us with you and the good archdeacon,¹ both whoseselves, people, and families, have a frequent place in my prayers. Particularly I desire to be mindful of Mrs. Adam, whose affliction I hope God has sanctified to you both, in making you more deeply sensible how much you deserve and need it, and thereby strengthening your faith and hope in God through Jesus Christ. What I recommend, it is my desire to practise, as troubles betide me; and am sensible (would God I were more so) that there is power of pride, worldly esteem, fear of men, and a self-will in my heart, which require the rod of affliction to suppress and mortify. Yet how thankful ought I to be on every account, and especially that with all my corruptions within, and trials without, I find an unwonted calmness resting on my spirit, and I would hope an increasing purpose of heart to cleave to duty.

Pray make my cordial respects to the dear folks at Glentworth, and I would be remembered tenderly to good Mrs. Adam. I am expecting to hear from you how she does, and about your sermons. May all the blessings of the covenant rest upon you in time and eternity.

¹ Bassett.

Mr. Walker does not express in this letter any very favorable opinion of the general state of the dissenters in his day. Instructive however, as his ministry, private experience, and pastoral counsel may have appeared in the preceding chapters of this volume, he was certainly not the less an example of the character of a true christian, in the liberality which he manifested towards those who differed from his views as to church discipline. He united to firmness of principle, an excellent benevolence of feeling ; for the grace of God had so expanded his affections, that there was a place in them for every brother, who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. One of the most interesting friendships upon record, was that which subsisted between him and the pious Risdon Darracott, of Wellington, in Somersetshire, whose light shone in the midst of darkness with such a heavenly brightness, that Whitfield, though not given to compliments, after a visit to the scene of his labours, called him the “ Star in the West.”

Like his tutor Doddridge, this guileless nonconformist could rejoice to look upon the crystal stream of life flowing in channels not his own ; nor did he and his associates desire any other result, than the fertilizing irrigation of a dry and barren world. The hearts of Doddridge and Darracott were as warm as their gifts and graces were brilliant ; and the sound of Zion’s trumpet in the church, made them exult in a hope that it would rouse multitudes from the sleep of death, who had never been within reach of its awakening voice. When writing to his friend at Wellington,

Mr. Walker observes, " I have not your warm heart ; Doddridge was not my tutor ; " and in a letter to a Cornwall correspondent, he remarks, " O ! what an excellent spirit was that of Dr. Doddridge ! No writings are like living epistles." When the curate of Truro and the independent minister of Wellington came together, their only design was to quicken the lustre of Christ's living image in their hearts : in their letters,¹ they wrote only to encourage each other in the true faith, to tell of souls rescued from Satan's bondage, and brought into the liberty of the gospel, or to lament their own deficiencies and the obduracy of their people. Mr. Walker congratulated Mr. Darracott on the piety of dissenters at Wellington ; and the latter expressed his joy at receiving tidings of good among churchmen at Truro. They had only these subjects of emulation—who should be the most faithful servant of the Redeemer, and who might count most trophies of victory over the spiritual enemies of God and man ; and this not in envy, but with true pleasure in each at the greater success of his brother. After a visit to Wellington, Mr. Walker wrote to Mr. Darracott, " Well, I hope I got a little spark among you, and that something like zeal is enkindled in the coldest heart in the world ; " and yet he never deviated from that "*regular* course," on which he conceived the " divine blessing eminently rested."

¹ Vid. An interesting series of letters in *Bennett's Life of Risdon Darracott*. London, 1815.

In general, the friendships existing between the most active conformists and their dissenting brethren, in the days of religious revival in this country, were of a very interesting and exemplary character, and did honour to the principles, piety, and sincerity of both. A constant remembrance of our own liability to err, should make us view with leniency what we consider to be the mistakes of others, especially when the various paths we tread meet in the same end. Inferior differences among men may be of little estimation in the infinite mind of the Supreme Being, if a pure desire of truth has conducted to them. The remark of Lord Bacon on this subject, is worthy of being deeply impressed on every reflecting mind—"A man that is of judgment and understanding, shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself that those which so differ, mean one thing, and yet themselves would never agree. And if it come to pass in that distance of judgment which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth discern that frail men in some of their contradictions intend the same thing, and accepteth both?" An entire unity of thought is no proof of great illumination, because all colours agree in the dark, when there is no sun to impart to them their proper hues; but in days of much light, the great thing is to discern between those which are injurious to the eye of faith, and such as are only points of opinion or order, based on equally good intentions. This was certainly the case with the pious clergy and dissenters at the æra which

now occupies our attention, though in some, the overflowings of love and zeal let a spirit of unity degenerate into detrimental laxity. Nothing of this kind disfigured the consistent friendship of Walker and Darracott: firm adherence to the course prescribed by their understandings, hardened not the sensibility of their hearts, nor did mutual admiration and Christian affection cause them to yield one iota of rooted principle in thought or action.

From the earliest dawn of the present day of light in our establishment, a similar spirit seems to have actuated its most learned and amiable divines, and was continued down to these times, without a suspicion that there lay a serpent, coiled in the downy folds of profession of love in many non-conformists, waiting only a convenient opportunity to dart its sting into the vitals of our church. Happily, however, this unchristian demonstration is not universal among our dissenting brethren; there yet remain those with whom may be enjoyed the same friendship and unity, which adorned the days of Secker and Doddridge, of Walker and Darracott. It is not fair to charge the whole body with the errors of a part, though it be a large one. Secker, when Bishop of Oxford, wrote thus to Doddridge in the truest spirit of candour and affection: ¹—“The dissenters have done excellently of late years in the service of Christianity, and I hope our common warfare will make us chiefly attentive to

¹ Vid. *Doddridge's Correspondence, &c. by his Son*, vol. iv. p. 272. London, 1830.

our common interest, and unite us in a closer alliance ;” and when elevated to the province of Canterbury, he maintained towards him a like admirable feeling. Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London, adopted the same kind and conciliatory tone to this excellent man. “ Whatever points of difference,” says he, “ there are between us, yet I trust that we are united in a hearty zeal for spreading the knowledge of the gospel, and for reforming the lives and manners of the people according to it. I have lived long enough to know by experience the truth of what we are taught, that ‘ there is no other name by which we may be saved, but the name of Christ only.’ ” He prays also that “ God would bless their united endeavours to make his ways known.”¹ The same holy flow of kindness took place almost every where among the pious, but in some cases it unhappily ran over ; yet the darkness of a world, enveloped in a night cloud of indifference and sin, will plead the lasting excuse of those somewhat erring but devoted children of God, who, unlike the divines just mentioned, suffered cooperation to become assimilation, and thus laid the foundation of many dangers, though they unquestionably effected much good.

As the happy spirit of concord increased between zealous clergymen and pious non-conformists, there seemed only to be wanting definite centres of union in which they might associate for the common purpose

¹ Vid. *Doddridge's Correspondence*, &c.

of doing good, merging minor interests and opinions in the all-absorbing object of spreading a knowledge of divine truth. Such presented themselves in the progress of time, and have gone on with various fluctuations to this hour; but what sort of spectacle does the conduct of those offer to the world, who profess love on the religious, and hostility on the political arena, who are to-day declaring affectionate co-operation on one platform, and the next proclaiming a wish to annihilate the essence of our system, on another!

The question is then, what should be the conduct of the clergy at this trying period? Assuredly to do nothing in haste; to make a wide distinction between those who in a Christian spirit agree to differ from them, and such as do not; to wait and see if opposition will not pass away; to strengthen the union of their own ranks; to redouble their diligence in their individual spheres—then will our church rise in its due majesty and strength, and emerging from the clouds of controversy, reflect the beams of the sun of righteousness in the clear heaven of light and love. If hostility should increase, it will be necessary to withdraw within our boundaries in peace; but we must labour in patience, argue with calmness, and do good to our opponents, not striking hastily if assaulted, because the second blow makes the contest. We should likewise earnestly pray for a return of the peaceful season, when friendships such as those just recorded, (which are not extinct, though perhaps necessarily diminished) may again adorn and dignify

the Christian world, the only contest of whose different members ought to be, the one fabled of the vine and the olive, which should be most fruitful.

Fortunately for us, the moment chosen by those who would remove the cords and posts of our sanctuary, is that of the greatest illumination of its altar, and the most diligent devotedness of its priesthood, and when their own ranks are being thinned by the numbers who return to the renovated bosom of the church—indications of God's presence with us, which Watts, Doddridge, Darracott, and their contemporaries would have witnessed, not with jealousy, but delight. They have also selected the period of a readiness to reform those things that have unavoidably degenerated by time, and even to curtail some of our own borders, where they have accidentally encroached on the natural field of others. We are placed in a difficult position ; are surrounded by men who are ready to invent, to amplify, and to believe every possible slander, and to pierce with false accusations, names illustrious for truest virtue, relying on a multitude's credulity, that "adamant of lies ;"¹ and who, artfully interlacing with professed zeal for public interests, private ambition and personal discontent, profess to be involuntarily carried on to their desire of innovation by the current of time, a stream let them remember, which bears the disaffected to change, the wise and good to perfection. The con-

¹ Lord Bacon says, *Magnes mendacii credulitas* : credulity is the magnet of lies. Lord Bacon translates it *adamant*, the old word for a *loadstone*.

sequence has been that in communities presided over by leaders of this stamp, policy has usurped the seat of spirituality, violence of Christian meekness, evil speaking of dignities, of the charity that hopeth all things, but—*this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish ; for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.*

The mention of the friendship between Walker and Darracott, naturally gave rise to these observations. Happy will it be for our Christian community when they have ceased to be applicable to any part of it. May that time speedily arrive. Let us strive to make the Church of Christ a scene of peace and love, so that the only emulation among its members may be, who shall most faithfully declare his Gospel, and shine brightest in the imitation of his graces.

CHAPTER XV.

INQUIRIES ON RETURNING HOME—PROOF OF MR. WALKER'S UNALTERABLE ATTACHMENT TO THE CHURCH—CORRESPONDENCE.

INQUIRIES.

As soon as Mr. Walker returned to Truro after his long tour, he thought it his duty to inquire of himself and make known to his people, the practical benefit he had derived from it to his own mind. He accordingly drew up and presented to the Society, the following interesting memorandum, which still remains in the hand of an amanuensis corrected by his own pen.

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 1757—After my return from a journey of seven weeks.

What have I brought home?

1. *Matter of thankfulness*—that I am brought safely to you—for God's *patience* with me in forgetfulness of his presence, and the workings of unbelief.

concerning the issue of my journey—for his *grace*, keeping me in some sort from the fear of man, and desire of pleasing the godly ; strengthening me against pride and conceit ; enabling me to declare for the Truth, and delivering me from interesting doubts—for the success of the gospel, zeal of ministers, and their great concern for souls—for the plain proof I have seen that God has kept us in the truth of the gospel, between the two extremes of legalism and antinomianism, and in such prudent measures as he is using every where ; particularly that he has provided us with means of establishment beyond others.

2. *Matter of Caution*—against itching ears—being puffed up for one against another—resting in awakenings and frames—sinking into a worldly and formal state—unedifying general conversation among religious friends—a narrow spirit.

3. *Matter of Reproof*—because of the coldness of my heart and prayers, and endeavours towards those that are without, in public or otherwise—shame of the gospel among us—cowardice—despising the day of small things.

4. *Matter of Lamentation*—because of abounding wickedness—the few who oppose it—the dangerous errors of some even of those, and damnable errors of others.

Exhortation. —Ye have received much, and should see Christ's love in it, to fill you with zeal for his glory, in the bringing in others, which ye should attempt by example, endeavour, and prayer. So ye will maintain life in your own souls.

In this way Mr. Walker rendered every circumstance of his life profitable to his people, and to his own mind. It is obvious also how truly such an intercourse must have endeared him to his converts, who could not fail to be persuaded that they were always among the highest objects of his affection, and were never excluded from his thoughts or forgotten in his prayers. He was not only their father, but “professed himself,” as Herbert says, “thoroughly of the opinion, carrying it about with him as fully as if he had begot the whole;” and the assurance of this was so plainly stamped upon his actions, that his people regarded all his movements with filial emotion. In this respect the minister and flock of Truro are invaluable examples to us all.

In the midst of his various and trying occupations, Mr. Walker found time to continue his profitable correspondence with the author of the “*Private Thoughts.*” The following letter shews the great kindness with which he regarded his young friend Mr. Burnet; and contains a remarkable declaration of the working of religion in his own mind. It also most satisfactorily proves his unalterable attachment to the Church of England, notwithstanding the fears Mr. Penrose expressed in his letter to Mr. Adam. It is fortunate indeed that it still exists in Mr. Walker’s own hand-writing to remove the slightest suspicion of his vacillation on so important a subject.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

Feb. 9th, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

My answer to your former letter it seems then is miscarried. Possibly it may lie at Brigg Post-office, for you bade me direct there. I wrote by the return of the post, and intimated our apprehensions that your attempts for G. Burnet would hardly succeed, but that George was ready if there were any hope. Besides the refusal of the Archbishop, he has been since told by the Bishop of Worcester, that neither he could pass him if there were an opening in his diocese. So we have given up the matter for the present, and George is by this time, we apprehend, engaged with a master of an academy in London, where he is to teach the languages. The terms are well enough, but he does not say for what time he has undertaken. This had in our judgment, a better aspect on his future obtaining orders, than going to Oxford, to which he did not incline himself. The thought of that had been suggested before by Miss ———, with a most generous offer of assistance. Your thoughts in answer to his enquiry about the controversy betwixt us and the dissenters, I heartily approve, and is what Mr. Conon had said to him in a letter since I came from London. George thinks me prejudiced in favour of the Church, and so has said nothing to me about it. This brings to my mind my friend

Penrose's letter to you. He was ashamed of his suspicions when he told me what he had done. It made me laugh, and so he is satisfied. Had there been the least thought in me of such a thing, I should have unbosomed myself to you, depend upon it. I am as well pleased with the church as any one that belongs to it; but take more pains than some would have me, to revive the doctrines of it; and this in the eyes of high church people, is to pull down and be disaffected to the church. You must know that our family is nearly related to that Dr. Walker who wrote the *Sufferings of the Clergy*; so we stand up for the highest edition of the Church of England. It was from this family quarter, that suspicion and the letter to you took rise.

Your papers we have read with pleasure, nor can see the least impropriety in speaking as you have done of the militia act, or to the clergy. Your address to the clergy should by no means be omitted, neither can I pick the least hole in it, unless it be an inquiry whether Mede be so clear on the point in question. I know nothing of Sanderson. Do not stop your hand by any means from printing your volume, whatever comes of your Fast Sermons, nor rest the matter on the issue of their success. You remember, sermons of that kind are a drug, and therefore small judgment may be made from the no-success of them; yet I believe yours will sell upon the strength of your catechism. In the militia clause may not the latter part of the sentence, "But my friend," be qualified by adding somehow the case of

Hazael, "is thy servant a dog?"¹ It will not be in my power to get your piece on confirmation printed immediately, but if you do it yourself, and it will not break in on your scheme, I shall be glad of five hundred of them.

Here a word for myself. I have every way cause of thankfulness, but come sadly short in that grace. I suppose spiritual sloth is most in my way, which hinders me from adverting sufficiently to my vileness, and God's mercies. How hard am I forced to struggle, that I may get any thing near God in prayer. And then, how soon am I weighed down again? Nevertheless, a better righteousness supports and keeps me in peace, (I sometimes fear it is security,) and then in the views of a reconciled God I can a little loath myself.

I am following your counsel.² What will be the issue, God knows; that he will order it, makes me in some sort easy. If the worst should come, I am thinking that may turn out for the best, and my suffering inconvenience, be the means of relieving the consciences of many of our brethren.

I bless God we seem now to have some little stirrings again among the careless ones. I had a comfortable evening of it last night, amidst eight or ten under awakenings.

My dear Sir, you need not tempt me with the thoughts of Wintringham: I know on whose side the loss falls. But we may not always dwell in the

¹ I do not know to what this alludes.

² With regard, I conceive, to the Burial Service.

earthly paradise of converse with the well-beloved of God. It will rejoice your heart more that your house be full of those who inquire after salvation. May the Lord give you that joy of your heart.

I speak without reserve. Your style is nervous, your sentences long, and I fancy your elocution rather swift: do your people understand you? Spare not, I beseech you, your cordially affectionate,

[S. WALKER.]

At the same time that he wrote this letter, he also addressed one to Mrs. Adam, who had been suffering under a long and painful illness.

To Mrs. Adam.

Feb. 9th, 1758.

DEAR MRS. ADAM,

I am sorry to find by a letter yesterday, from Mr. Adam, that mine to him a month ago, in which I inclosed a line to yourself, is miscarried. Not that there was any thing of consequence in it, but that I desired to testify as I might, my esteem for you, and fellow-feeling for your then case. That it has pleased God to restore you in some degree, dear Mr. Adam informs me now, and be assured I rejoice in it. I hope, too, he has blessed his correction to you, lifting up his reconciled face upon you, and causing you to be glad in the fulness of his salvation.

These were the sentiments, it gave me much pleasure to hear you express your alone confidence in ; and I am promising myself, God has prepared your heart under your late long disorder, to receive them more abundantly in all their fulness and consolation. For where, Madam, shall poor sinners turn themselves for comfort and peace? Shall they turn to their own righteousness? Alas, where will they find it? They are sinners. While they search diligently for good in themselves, they do but more distinctly discover that altogether they are sin ; and so increase instead of lessen their fear. Shall they turn to hopes of amendment? They cannot amend ; and if they could, how shall they pay off the old debt? Shall they turn to the merits of the Redeemer? Shall they venture their souls on free grace? They may, they *must*. And when they do, they experience the peace that passeth understanding, in proportion with the measure of their faith ; that love which they see, in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus for them, God bears to them, spreads itself over their whole souls, draws up their desires after God, subdues their stubborn wills, making them easy with his dispensations, whatever they be, and causes them to long earnestly for spiritual liberty, that they may serve God in holiness ; while also the fears of death abate, and the hope of glory taken possession of by Christ for us glows with vigour, we long, we thirst, for the living God, and the cool deliberate choice and wish of our souls is, “ When shall I come to appear before the presence of God ? ” Surely, happy are the people

that are in such a case. I hope you can say so for yourself, and now more than ever. The Lord increase your faith a thousand fold, and give you plentifully of that joy, wherewith a stranger to Jesus cannot meddle. O, what enemies are they even to their present happiness, who live in an unhumbled, and, of course, an unbelieving state! Self-willed they are, yet cannot be gratified; they murmur in the midst of all blessings, and what then must they suffer when the hand of the Lord is upon them? The way to peace is to walk believingly; and the only way to that is to walk humbly, lying low in the sight of our sins, past, and present.

That the infinitely merciful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may bless you in all the needs of your soul, till he bring you to eternal rest, is the sincere and fervent prayer of,

Your affectionate Servant in Christ,
S. WALKER.

P. S.—I beg to be remembered to your sister and the young ladies. Tell the latter, their uncle does not say a word to me that they have fulfilled the promise they made me the Sunday afternoon. I think of Wintringham with much pleasure, and no small regret it is so far away.

To this letter Mr. Walker received no reply till the month of May, when Mr. Adam again opened the correspondence with him. His letter manifests both the high opinion he entertained of his Truro friend,

and his own laudable anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his flock at Wintringham.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

May, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

I have been long without writing. Indeed you have work enough upon your hands, and it is almost necessary to give you some time to breathe. What shall I now say, but that my heart is with you, and that I shall always think of the few days you spent here, as a happy part of my life? I heartily wish, not altogether for my own sake, that you was more master of yourself, and had leisure for more such journies. You leave a savour of yourself wherever you come, and should travel. Go on increasing in humility, as well as labour and success, and like Paul, be less than the least, of all littleness. Whatever God does by you, will not enter into your reward. He keeps a piercing eye upon the heart; and in that thought you will always tremble before him. I do, and have no refuge but in the wounds. I thank you for directing my wife to that foundation, and she will derive both comfort and strength from it. I bless God she is better, but still lame and weak, and has a feverish disorder lurking upon her. I cannot find by any scrutiny into myself, how I should have been in case of her death. My only confidence was, that I had none.

Dear Sir, believe that your hints are as well taken

as they are well meant. Think free, and speak plain ; and do not wrong yourself so much as to think you need any apology. There is truth in what you observe. My periods are long,—but I apprehend seem longer than they really are, by my manner of pointing. Others would divide one into two or three, as I do in speaking. My way in the pulpit is rather slow than otherwise, and nothing like what it seemed in reading to you. *I am* understood. The generality know very well what I am aiming at, but will not understand with their hearts, and are so far from coming to my house to inquire after salvation, that they turn a deaf ear to me when I carry it to theirs. They understood *you*, but all rebounded from the hard rock, and they thought themselves safe by saying that you are a stricter preacher than myself. Your zealous compassionate prayers are wanted here. Not but that there is a difference betwixt this and former times, when I knew and said nothing. Some are impressed ; and though it is yet but a day of small things, there is room to hope. On I must go, offering myself to the work, and then leaving it in God's hands. Ever since you was here, I have been reading a chapter on Wednesday evenings. I have gone through the Gospel of St. Luke, and am now in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which by the way I take to be a general Epistle, and the full opening of the mystery of man's salvation by Jesus Christ, without regard to the circumstances of any particular place.

It is said the words "*Church* at Ephesus" are not in some ancient copies. I take some pains to be

prepared, though I fear not enough by prayer; and the result of my reading and speaking this year has been, that the number of hearers has kept increasing from less than 20 to a 100 or more; whereas in former years, the number used to be larger at first, and then dwindled almost to nothing. With respect to catechising, previous to my entering upon it this year, I desired the servants and young persons to meet me one evening at Church, where they accordingly came. I spoke to them in the plainest, and most affecting manner I could, of the usefulness and necessity of it, but do not find that a third part of them attend on Sundays. They say they will not be asked questions, though I ask none without putting the answer into their mouths. What then? Those who do come, do it resolutely in spite of scoffs, &c. from others, and I doubt not will be the better for it. Again pray for us.

Printing is at a stand. I don't know that the packet you carried to —— has ever been opened. That must necessarily create a stop. But to speak the truth, I am backward to appear in public, and pride pleads hard for my keeping snug at home, in my own good opinion of myself. Though I can be positive, I do not think so well of my productions as you do. I am still willing to be directed. The Fast Sermons are where they were, and will be. I sent a little piece on confirmation with my name to it, to Mr. B., and desired him to inquire about the terms of printing 1500. You shall know when they are ready. Mr. B. writes that there is a probability of

an usher's place, both at B. and B ; but I imagine he is fixed by contract for a time to Mr. F. They will push hard for him, and he seems to me to give way too much. The papers say, Mr. Walker has got a living in Cornwall. If it should be the man of Truro, I wish it may be agreeable to him. I know you have but one view in life. I have just room to tell you by way of news, that Mr. F. having abridged the *Saint's everlasting Rest*, was desirous of dedicating it to Lord D. and put me upon asking his permission. The dedication was extremely proper, and I pressed his lordship to a consent, almost beyond the bounds of decency, but his modesty got the better of him. You need not speak of this.

I am, with salutation to Christian Friends,

Most affectionately Yours,

[THOS. ADAM.]

Nothing is more remarkable in the histories of devoted ministers, than the very different degrees of success that seem to follow equally zealous and persevering labours. Thus God deals with the stewards of his mysteries for reasons incomprehensible to us, but nevertheless infinitely wise, and infinitely good ; and therefore we should never permit an apparent want of a present blessing on the means used, to diminish our confidence in the ultimate success of faithful perseverance. The Lord uses his instruments as he will, and employs some for immediate, others for ulterior purposes, all of which he will accomplish in his own time, and in his own way. Both our depression and our re-

joicing have generally in them too much of self, which renders a salutary check often necessary to our efficient instrumentality. Neither are we always judges of what is solid usefulness. The seed which produces the most vigorous plants and the weightiest grain, is often the longest dormant in the soil, while nothing but the most vigilant husbandry can counteract the dangers of a rapid luxuriance. The cloud also gives the fertilizing rain, while sunshine too long continued, turns the richest earth to dust. Ministers therefore have only to continue working and sowing, in the assurance that in due season they "shall reap if they faint not;" and it may console those who see no encouraging symptoms in their outset, to remember that a chilly withering spring is sometimes succeeded by a glorious autumnal harvest. Had Mr. Adam never experienced the difficulties he so feelingly expressed, in all probability we should never have enjoyed the benefit of his *Private Thoughts*, a work that has conferred incalculable benefit on many a Christian reader.

About a month after the date of the last letter, Mr. Walker wrote to Mr. Adam as follows. This letter is full of piety, and confirms what has been before stated of the zeal of awakened churchmen, his cotemporaries.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

June 7, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

After expecting a long while to see your Fast Sermons advertised, your letter told me you had changed your mind. But I was more dissatisfied to find you hesitated about publishing the others. To my thinking, the gifts we have are not our own, be they more or less ; and if the Church may be the better for them, such as they are, she has a right to them. I confess she has a right to the best we can bring her ; therefore we should exert our best ability ; and methinks the determination whether our labours may be of service to her, will be safest in the hands of others. You see I am importunate for your throwing in something. You do not think so well of your productions as I do. I am sure I do not think of my judgment as I do of yours, and must allow the reasonableness of this objection. But there is a method of removing it. These sermons were written without any eye to publishing. It is a remark I have made, that what is fittest to preach, is not to be read. Suppose, therefore you were to sit down and write a sermon with a design of publishing. Whether part of a scheme or not, it might be published immediately. A second might be added as you had opportunity, and when as many as would make a volume were gone out, your preface would be prefixed to the whole. This method I should like

best, because I thought there was a visible superiority in the preface, which was drawn up with a design of publishing, and [that it was] marked with a more easy distinction of method than appeared to me in the discourses. I know you can do, and shall not leave you at peace unless you be doing.

To discover to you my sentiments about myself in this respect, I have found myself, particularly of late, a good deal impressed with the thought of not hiding my talent (such as it is) in a napkin ; carried beyond the thought of praise or reproach, into a serious consideration of the present abounding ignorance, and the confusedness in stating Gospel truths under which our zealous brethren lie, while their hearts are animated by a noble warmth that altogether reproves me. In the midst of these views, which had set me a plotting to attempt something, and hastened me to finish the papers you have seen, and to write some sermons on the scheme for religious conversation, which I think you have not seen, came the inclosed from Mr. Venn, a London clergyman, till of late a sort of dependant on John Wesley, but now brought to believe for himself. I saw and preached for him when in town. He is a man very desirable in his temper, humble and teachable. The paper you have herewith is that he mentions, revised. I send it to you for correction. Return it without delay. He shall have it, to do with it what he will. Only it shall be published anonymous, to avoid the look of ostentation.

The Mr. Walker mentioned in the papers as insti-

tuted to a living, is my eldest brother. Here I am where I was, following your prudent advice about the burial office, and hearing no longer any murmurings about it, though great things were threatened at first. Yet I have my complaints for the remaining lamentable ignorance of many of my people, witnessed in their last hours, and for the more lamentable licentiousness of more, daily growing worse. The leading people are against me, and countenance the rest. I hope I do not spare to speak freely in public at least ; more I might do occasionally in private.

My remark on your delivering yourself rather swiftly, was founded on friend Jane's and George's observation chiefly, though I thought you exceeded that way in reading prayers. Did I mention also, that you seemed to me holden by a constitutional reservedness, which would be apt to keep your people at a distance when you talk with them ? I wish you would come down and watch me.

For good news—Browne, Bishop of Cork, lately preached the gospel so freely at Bath, that as it is reported to us from London, he was at last refused the pulpit. He is certainly an evangelical man. The aid-de-camp to the present expedition was so shaken by a sermon of Romaine's, as to become a bold professor. Tom Haweis has good speed at Oxford. There are pretty many already coming to him in private, and he hopes very well of a few of them. Christ rides prosperously at St. Agnes. Brother Vowler tells me, he has there, who meet among themselves in little parties weekly for free conversa-

tion, no less than seventy persons ; and the number is as large of those who apply to him, but are not gone so far. His patience and prudence will I believe overcome the strange opposition made against him by the Methodists. In their eye, both he and I are *well-meaning legalists*. Mr. Philp acquaints me that the alarm increases in his parish and neighbourhood in the north of Devon. My cordial congratulations to dear Mrs. Adam on her recovery is all at present, from

Dear Sir, your sincerely affectionate,
[S. WALKER.]

To this Mr. Adam replied :—

To the Rev. S. Walker.

July, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

All your admonitions are friendly, seasonable, and welcome, and need no apology. Spare them not, and I can assure you they shall never be so far lost as to be ill taken. The reservedness so apparent in me, and which you call constitutional, is really so in a high degree, and hard to overcome. But I do not excuse it to myself in that manner, calling it timidity, and fearing that a superior principle of zeal for the glory of God, is not strong enough in me to counterwork it. Ply me with advice and exhortation, and do you go on exerting your advantages of nature and grace.

I should be sorry to say a word that might administer the least food to pride, and when any thing of that kind drops from me, be upon your guard. You know where the praise of all is due. What is spoken in sincerity, may be spoken to good purpose, and need not take you off the bottom of your own nothingness. Mr. Burnet has transcribed for me your "Helps to the better knowing our own hearts." It is a searching piece, and may be of excellent use to those who are in earnest, and willing to know themselves. I cannot stand before it, and must take refuge in my knowing and striving against natural corruption, assuredly believing that it will both be forgiven and helped, if it is seen and lamented. I could wish to have it published for general benefit, and also join heartily with Mr. Venn, in desiring you not to defer publication of the important question, so wretchedly trifled with or explained away. With the divine blessing, it may cause many searchings of heart. You know how I have been galled with the subject. Past prevarication is a heavy load upon me, damps my thoughts, and I fear my endeavours. This is weakness, if not worse. The Archdeacon's advice, and your practice, is good ; double your diligence.

As to zealous brethren, but, as you say, confused in stating Gospel truths, indeed I see not what can be done. Unity of sentiment is not to be expected ; and if we agree in essentials, calling sinners to repentance, directing them to Christ, and building them up in holiness, lesser points must be overlooked. The person who struck the aid-de-camp, by no means

pleases me in carrying up the point of saving faith to so high a pitch of particular sensibility and assurance. But, nevertheless, he is blessed to the conversion and edification of many. G. B.¹ writes me his fears and apprehensions on this head. I shall tell him in answer, that we must do as well as we can for ourselves, be very candid to others, and rejoice to think we shall all be of a mind in heaven. My dear Sir, it is partly in this view that I consider your intended directions for the clergy. Those who are forward of themselves, are pre-engaged in some way of their own, (good in the main) have taken their ply, and perhaps would not do so well in any other. Let what I say be given up to better judgments.

As to my publishing, your advice has the force of a law with me ; and yet I know you will leave me free. If you was well persuaded that such discourses as you saw might be likely to advance the common cause, or in point of sentiment support our brethren who are labouring in the fire, I could not hesitate a moment. I told you tacitly, they were not drawn up with the least view to publication, and now tell you that I am not sure I could mend my hand ; nay, I am pretty sure that nothing to the purpose would come from me with straining. Neither should I choose to give in to art and neatness of composition, if I was master of it. Whatever advantage it may be to moral preaching, whose chief aim is to please, it is for the most part rather a weakening of evangelical. This is

¹ Mr. Burnet.

not intended as the least check to you ; and what you recommended will not be forgotten.

I saw the Bishop of Cork at Scarborough last summer, and held up my candle to his sunshine. He has a grave appearance ; and I hear from you and others, something more. I am told he has always your "*Christian*" in his pocket. Set him against another bishop, or rather keep yourself full in the truth, and according as you preach Christ, look for just such a measure of persecution. With this word, dear Sir, adieu. My salutations to Mr. Conon, and all your working friends, on whom a thousand blessings. God keep you all humble. My wife, I thank God is something better. She has a right sense of your advice and prayers, and desires the continuance of them.

T. A.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONVERSATION SCHEME—DEATH AND FUNERAL OF
MR. VOWLER—LETTERS TO MR. BURNET AND MR.
ADAM.

CONVERSATION SCHEME.

THOSE who are acquainted with Mr. Walker's "*Practical Christianity*," will remember that the fourth of the nine tracts which compose that excellent little volume, is entitled, "Regulations and Helps for Promoting Religious Conversation among Christians." The "Regulations" are eleven rules, drawn up much in the same spirit as his directions to the Truro Society; and the "Helps" consist of questions on the like number of subjects, with illustrations of each of them. The subjects are—Humility—Faith in Jesus Christ—Love of God—Love of our Neighbour—Hope of Glory—Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness—Mortification of Sin—Honesty—Thankfulness. These are all illustrated with Mr. Walker's

usual power and searching knowledge of the human heart, and are “designed to help inexperience, to undeceive the presuming, and to satisfy the doubting.” As was his custom, Mr. Walker requested the opinion of Mr. Adam upon this scheme, which he gave him with his habitual freedom, in the subjoined letter.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

DEAR SIR,

Your “Conversation Scheme,” as might be expected, is a searching piece, and contains a fund of precious knowledge. You are the best judge, from your greater acquaintance with the religious sects, how far it is reducible to practice as a Conversation Scheme, and will make allowance for my inexperience in suggesting the following queries.

May it not be supposed that some, according to their natural tempers and dispositions, will be apt to think and speak more highly of themselves than they ought? On the other hand, will not some of the more timid and doubting sort, be filled with tormenting scruples, when they find in how many things they come short? And should not, therefore, something be said by way of caution to keep them out of that gulph? You say, truly, that you send all to the *tutissimum* of the merits; and I cannot help observing, how charmingly you tell me in your last, of your being driven to it yourself. But even as to the second

conversation concerning faith in Jesus Christ, may there not be some, whose case is far from being hopeless, who cannot answer readily and directly to the questions there asked; and is not the motive under¹ carried to rather too high a pitch of assurance? You will consider of the consequence of asking one question, which a real Christian may be at a loss about; whether any are so highly spiritual as to be able to answer all your questions, and, therefore, again, whether it is not necessary, some way or other, to guard against the mistakes of their thinking it a lost case with them if they are not.

The tempers, and particular circumstances of those under your eye, may be known in some measure, and have a due regard paid to them, in a private conversation; but as you now ask my advice with a view to publication, I thought it proper to offer what I do. Make what use you please of what I say, and do not think I have any design to lay a rub in the way of your publishing what I wish to leave in the hands of all serious persons, as an excellent guide to them in the examination of self. Your helps to the knowledge of the heart, are already too large for me, and should be judged of and corrected by one, who has less latent corruption there than I have.

Suppose something like this should be added to your preliminary advices,² — “Lastly, let me advise and caution you, with regard to the following marks

¹ The first division of a section in the “Helps.”

² Mr. Walker followed this advice.

of trial (or heads of conversation), not to be forward and assuming on the one hand, in thinking and speaking more highly of yourself than you ought, which will effectually hinder all farther improvements; nor, on the other, to be too much dejected if you find, as probably you will, that you do not come up to some of them; but first grounding yourself wholly on the Lord Jesus Christ, for salvation, to be thankful for the measure of grace which is given you, carefully to improve it, and in all faithfulness and love to your Redeemer, pressing on to higher degrees of perfection."

I am backward to appear in print, and free to own that pride is more or less at the bottom of it. The application is, that mediocrity had better keep itself at home, that no end can be answered where there are not talents to excel; and yet, if I thought I could do good to a few, I should not fear the censure of all the rest. You will trace me. I send you another specimen of Scripture reading; and if you and your friends, upon a strict scrutiny, find there is any life in it, will consider (mark the word) of publishing the gospel and epistle, with a short preface to the gospel, recommending the method, I am, and you tell me you are in, to the notice of our brethren, and the intended preface to the sermons prefixed to the Epistle to the Ephesians, as being suited to the scope of it. Whether this design turns uppermost or not, that of the ten commandments is not near so ripe as you seem to imagine. You say you want a tract to put into the hands of the half-awakened and ignorant. Why not

your own, which you drew up for the direction of the younger clergy, and altered for that purpose? As I still think it may do, if you go to work upon it, I have only one thing to recommend, which is, that you would avoid too much precision, and what the archdeacon calls, splitting the hair.

1st. Conversation (c.) Your dependance on the Light of the Spirit in Prayer. This is incautiously worded. It looks like a condemnation of all praying by a form, which may, or may not, be spiritual prayer, according to truth of desire and frame of the heart.

If you advise printing, methinks I would fain have you see the whole, and some indifferent person besides. You may be too partial. Mr. B. says, the annotations are pithy, but too short; and that though he understands me, some others may not. Nothing could be better than Burkitt, if he was not too prolix.

If Mr. E. will have his own terms, what can you do? I am persuaded it would be almost a heart-breaking to you to leave your present large sphere of action, where you are so well employed, and have been so remarkably blest. As to a maintenance, *Deus providebit*. You have already had some earnest and experience of this, and if you can be content to work with him by the day, will not find him a forgetful master. What you call stupid insensibility in the matter, I hope is well weighed judgment, true resignation, and grace in the heart. For my own part, I sometimes think my being in an independent

state is a hindrance to self-knowledge, and leaves but little room for the exercise of a child-like trust. Upon the whole, does not Mr. E.¹ want to get rid of you? In that case I think you would do well to disappoint him at any rate, till another scene of as great usefulness presents itself. The Lord counsel, support, and comfort you. You know that Christian joy is joy, and every thing else of inferior consideration. When you are straitened, do not let me be the last to know it. I think myself not a little interested in the success of your *Christian*, and am glad to hear it holds up its head. I want to know the title of Mr. V's book, and who it is printed for. I heard Miss —— was at L. on account of her health, and wish her and her acquaintance joy of the restoration of it. My wife, I bless God, is better, but still so weak and emaciated, that we can hardly flatter ourselves with the hopes of a perfect recovery. She desires her respects, and thinks herself much obliged to you, for your christian concern for her.

Dear Sir, many hearty thanks for all your communications, advices, and exercises.

I am, most sincerely and affectionately yours,

[THOS. ADAM.]

It is impossible to read these remarks on the Conversation Scheme, without admiring the sound judgment and caution displayed in them. Of the many privileges belonging to the faithful in this life,

¹ Mr. Walker's Rector.

none is sweeter than the communion of saints ; but when we consider the great variety of character existing even among Christians, it must be acknowledged, that to carry it on well, requires much practical wisdom. The effects of imagination, the force of lively feeling, the credulity of the weak, the wrong inferences of the inaccurate, the discouragements of the timid, the despondency of the doubting, and the backwardness to speak out of the modest, have with many more conditions of the mind, to be cared for, and prudently dealt with, or the comforts of some will become the hindrances of others, and destroy the result intended. Mr. Walker no doubt took the hint from similar meetings amongst the Methodists, from whose system many important lessons may be learned by us all ; yet it may be fairly questioned, without offence to that body, whether this part of their proceedings has not tended more than they suspect, to make individual faith loose, though it has helped to compact the general frame of their Society. *Experience* as it is called, and there is no objection to the term, may be imaginary ; *principles* alone are solid. Therefore conversation on the latter will be always profitable, while a narration of the former may be injurious both to the speaker and his friends. Besides, where is the man to be found, who will *faithfully* declare *all* his experience before a mixed company ? And if any part of it is omitted, the case is not fairly, and therefore not beneficially stated. Such a communication of the progress of religion in an individual, is often happily made to one

friend at a time ; but to introduce it as a topic of *general* conversation, will it is feared, in a majority of instances, be attended with more harm than edification. A conversation of pious people coming together to clear up doubts, to examine fundamentals, to animate to perseverance, to exhort to duty, to excite to prayer, and to insist on growth in holiness, will ever be truly valuable ; but the secrets of the heart should be laid open only in private intercourse with a minister or friend, and before God in the closet. As to the *plan* of the methodists, its excellence is undeniable ; the only doubt is as to the *subjects* directed to be introduced when they are met.

The next letter of Mr. Walker's is addressed to an excellent couple, whose union was cemented by the love of Christ. It shews how great a privilege it was to possess him for a friend. Allusion is also made in it to the death of his worthy neighbour, Mr. Vowler, mentioned in a former letter to Mr. Adam.

Truro, August 6, 1758.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have little to say, and less time. My greatest trouble is with a very bad heart, overcome with selfishness, which contends for indulgence that way, and I am too ready to gratify it. I approve a living simply to God's glory in the world, and in a disregard of ease, interest, or esteem, to maintain an interest in Jesus' kingdom. But my conduct is too much on the defensive, and wants abundantly that

zeal which seeks and uses every opportunity. O Faith! Faith! 'tis this works all, by beholding a glorious, gracious Governor of the world, and therein one worthy to be served, and fit to be depended on for time and eternity. You are all joining in my complaints, but I am ready to think you have not my reason for it. I want your conversation; yet I deserve it not, because when with me I make so little use of you. We have much to blame ourselves for this way—all of us, and particularly that [we] have spent so many hours together, without coming to a proper Christian freedom in giving and receiving advice, for correction, edification, and encouragement. But the blame lies most at my door because of my office. I beg we may come nearer, [and] have proposed it to —, who gladly consents; and now it lies only on you two, to be willing and forward to our passing weekly together an hour in prayer and free conversation. May the Lord dispose all our hearts, and increase this best token of love between you both while you are absent! Poor — is certainly an eminent saint: I am greatly reprov'd by his deep abasement of spirit. O pride of knowledge, life, learning, station—'tis very hard for the rich of any sort to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

I called the society together last night, and spoke to them from Vowler's death. The hints were Acts vii. 60; the account of Stephen's death and burial.

- Observation 1. His profession of Christ in his life.
 2. His comfort in Christ at death.
 3. The loss and lamentation of the church.

Mr. Vowler's life ye know ; his end, as much as I knew of it, was thus. Monday, July 29th, 1758, at two o'clock, he was suddenly brought into the nearest views of death, concerning which he told me when I came to him (by which time he was revived) that he had found it an awful thing to go into eternity ; that the thought at first shook him, but that he was soon supported. I asked by what ; his answer in substance was, " the righteousness of Christ." I spoke a good deal from Scripture on that head, and then asked if he had any thing on his conscience. He told me shortly, with an evident content on that head, he had nothing. We had frequent short discourses during the day, wherein he appeared to be quite composed, joining in prayer with calmness. Next morning at two, I was called to him, and found him near his end, but tolerably in his senses. His head was hurried, yet he employed his last use of reason in a solemn surrender of himself into the hands of Christ, in the deepest expressions of his vileness, and the most importunate requests for mercy. He ended thus in David's words, as the whole in a manner had been, " Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me ? Put thy trust in God ; for I will yet give him thanks who is the help of my countenance and my God." There was an inexpressible force in his manner of saying *my God*. After this he panted, and then fell into an act of thanksgiving, as the other, in Scripture phrase. I suggested a Scripture or two ; but he was too far gone to give attention.

This I believe was his last use of reason : he said he would compose himself, but soon fell into a delirium, in which he continued either raving or speechless, (but when he raved, always evangelically) till half an hour after nine that morning, when he expired.

Use 1. Let us live in the thought of death.

2. Let us hold fast faith and a good conscience.

3. Let us lament the loss of so useful a minister.

4. Let us be thankful for the gospel while we have it.

Did I tell you ——— has accepted the curacy of St. Agnes? You set out, to be sure, next week? My Christian respects to the ladies and all friends.

Yours in the only bonds,

S. W.

Mr. Vowler, whose last moments are here described, was one of that faithful band of ministers who entered into all Mr. Walker's projects of usefulness, with a kindred spirit of zeal and piety. He was summoned to his account in the prime of life, after a short though effective career of labour ; but his memory was long cherished by hearers who profited under his preaching, and friends who were united to him in that intimacy of heart, which is felt only by those who love the brethren for their work's sake. A weeping throng crowded to his burial, and many tears were shed upon the coffin, wherein lay without voice or animation, the frame they had often seen exhibiting the energy a love of souls inspired, while it

pointed to the Lamb of God as their only sufficient sacrifice and availing intercessor. The opportunity was, like all others, improved by Mr. Walker, who delivered a most impressive Funeral Address.¹

The two letters of Mr. Walker, which form the remainder of this chapter, breathe his usual spirit. One was addressed to his friend Mr. Burnet, on his ordination,—an event he had long anxiously desired and endeavoured to promote. The other is to Mr. Adam, from which it will be seen, that though some months had elapsed when he wrote, since the death of Mr. Vowler, he still entertained a vivid recollection of his loss. He gives a most affecting account of his feelings at the bed-side of his dying fellow-labourer, and opens his mind in the way of confession and advice, in such language as could only proceed from a truly humble follower of the meek and lowly Saviour. The letter to Mr. Burnet has the precedence, being first in order of date.

To the Rev. G. Burnet on his ordination.

Truro, Sept. 25, 1758.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I was hoping to write you previous to your ordination, but could not effect it; nevertheless, I have not been wanting in prayer on your behalf, and your case was our employment the last Tuesday evening. I have the greatest confidence that the blessed God, who has kept you hitherto, will not

¹ It was given in the last edition of this Memoir.

leave you now that you are intrusted with so vast a charge by him, and for him ; and that as the spirituality, zeal, and diligence of your ministrations will depend upon the dispositions of your own heart, he will abundantly increase a ministerial temper. We cannot be in our ministrations what we are not in ourselves. But I would not deal in generals. Let me rather speak to you of what has been my case in the ministerial work. It imports nothing to repeat what you know already of my indisposedness for it, in the first years after my being in orders. Since I was any how stirred up to labour, I have these things principally to lament. 1. The workings of conceit, especially in talking or hearing of what was done by me, which has cost me a deal of self-condemnation, and needed much fear and watchfulness to oppose. In the beginning I saw little of it and less of its evil ; and though now it is but rarely I experience what I call a sensible conceit, the pleasing tickling of the heart, yet I have cause to fear a worse thing, a more settled self-opinion, which would receive commendation as its due, and expect submission in others. 2. A most abominable fear of men's faces, especially in personal conference. I have been forced to fight every inch of my way against this, and not without repeated advantage on its part and a perpetual consciousness of not having acted up to duty. I have hardly courage to this day in that private way, to act on the offensive. This was evidently from a love of esteem, supported by a constitutional timidity. 3. Love of ease, wishing to be quiet, and hoping to be

so when this and that trial should be over, and often making myself so at Christ's expence. This is a most pernicious, anti-ministerial sin, wonderfully repressing zeal: and diligence and charity. 4. Sloth, which has often invaded duties, and being joined by bodily indisposition, sheltered under it. I have special cause to be on my guard here, lest insensibly it eat out all, and bring my state and conduct into a consumption. 5. Resting on means, and distrusting grace: the latter has brought me many needless *fears*, the former as many needless *labours*. 6. Much self-will, in expecting that all things should be ordered to my mind and liking, not approving the ways of the Spirit, nor waiting his time. 7. Not enough committing my work to God by prayer: this is a capital fault!

On the other hand, I have been supported, 1. By views of God's dishonour in the sins of men, begetting a desire to retrieve his glory. 2. By frequent deep impressions of compassion over sinners. 3. By a strong confidence Christ would be with me in my work, according to his promise, and that he would not suffer me to be tempted above what I am able. This confidence regarding the success of my work, is not sensible on my heart as formerly, and seems rather hid from me. 4. By much comfort in those God hath given me. 5. By a great jealousy over myself on their account, lest I should be an offence to them: this has helped me out in many a pinch. 6. By conscience also I have been often supported, when afterwards I could not see there had been much,

if any thing, evangelical in the motive. Make what use you can of these hints. I wish my case humbled me more than it does. I observe in yours to Mr. C. you complain of a *dead stupor*: looking too much for sensible impressions, has often discouraged me on one side, and diverted me from seeking the practical influences of faith on the other. I desire the Spirit may work upon me this way. 1. That by a divine illumination, he may present to me the certainty, greatness, and importance of spiritual things. 2. That hereby and herewith, he may bring my will to a more resolute, determined, free, absolute, and abiding agreement with them. Let me see this done, and manifested to be so by my conduct, and I am easy.

Yours, in all affection,

SAMUEL WALKER.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

Dec. 7th, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

It is well for me your last bears no date. What has occasioned so long a silence? A variety of occurrences from abroad has taken me up. I have scarcely found time to care for my people, and go through the ordinary work. Particularly in the end of August, I was called to assist my dear friend and most indefatigable fellow-labourer, Mr. Vowler of St. Agnes, in his last hours. I judge more from his life than manner of death, that he died in the

Lord, though his temper and conduct were very encouraging and highly evangelical in that trying season.

My dear Sir, this is the second of Christ's faithful, painful and successful servants in the Gospel, it has pleased the Lord to employ me about in those interesting circumstances. I could do little but admire and adore the work of God, standing by and beholding the power and grace of Christ. Truly, faith appeared so awful in its operations, humility so deep, the vastness of eternity so greatly impressed on the mind, that I thought I had all to learn of the act of dying, and was so far left behind, that I could presume only to hint a question and a Scripture. It was a season never to be forgotten. You would have seen there the full grace of that expression, "rejoice with trembling." Such prostration of spirit, such cleaving to Christ, such importunate humble prayer and praise! methought I was a stranger to all. It is strange such great opportunities should have so little effect upon me, should be so much forgotten. I have very serious complaints against myself on this head, and am convinced that if I do not improve the ordinary means, the others shall do me little service. I am examining with some care, I hope, the state of my soul, and searching after [the causes] that I find little of vital change. The carnal enmity against God stands, I think, principally in my way, opposing the constant and lively sight of God in the face of Christ, and so leaving me without any thing, I am ready to fear, of that delight in God, reverential fear,

trust, and desire to please God, which constitute the hidden man of the heart. And while I am so exceedingly wanting here, I am principally condemned, that, through spiritual sloth, I am no more animated to seek and long after the renewings of the Holy Spirit. I would not be content with a negative religion, ceasing from evil, were that possible, without positively learning to do well; yet we are apt to sit down too easy when conscience has no great thing to say against us. In such views of myself, I am forced to make Christ all my righteousness, in spite of pride. But then I would take heed not to make Christ a minister of sin, and encourager of hope and confidence toward God, if I do not put forth all my strength to love and serve him. What I have said, will, I know, excite your prayers, and engage you to think of and advise me.

We are strangely quiet at present. I wish it be not owing to our coldness or cowardice. There was a strong push against friend Canon two months ago to turn him out of his school; but it came to nothing. Since that we are left in peace. And what I think is extraordinary, I hope a token for good, though I have begun a new exercise in the Church on Sunday evenings, since the Catechetical Lectures ended (the last of October), being encouraged to it by the increasing numbers that attended those lectures this autumn, yet it is no way opposed and is abundantly followed. What I have undertaken for this winter's work is the Sermon on the Mount. Your notes have helped me, but Bengelius greatly. The improve-

ments are ordinarily my own, because most familiar to me to speak of. I have gained some light at least from what has been done ; and am setting out Christ as magnifying the law, especially in opposition to Pharisaism. What blessing shall attend this attempt is with God. Nothing singular appears.

While I speak of Christ as preaching the law, I cannot but observe the lamentable ignorance of the spirituality of it, that abounds in all sorts. About four years ago at our Archdeacon's Visitation, when the clergy were met, the preacher was not found, and I was then for decency's sake desired to supply his place, which I did by preaching the sermon my people had heard the Sunday before. More than one of the clergy were astonished at hearing me accuse every one present of having broken every commandment, and two of them to my knowledge expressed much resentment and ridicule on the occasion. And now it is but a week ago, that being in conversation with a very sensible, aged, and in some respects well read clergyman, he charged me with the same as a thing absurd, and contended that himself was blameless of some of them, instancing the second commandment. I doubt not since the Arminian doctrines have had their full swing, this may be very common among our order. What a pitiable case, considered in its consequences ! Should not some familiar spiritual explanation of the law be sent abroad ? Think of it, and if it suits you, set to it : I have more than twenty sermons on the law lately finished, which, should you imagine capable of giving a hint here and there, I

shall be ready to send you. To say the truth, I do not wish you to lie in a corner, and that the world be no more the better for you. You mistake my meaning, when you think I would desire your sermons to have the polite polish. Your natural style is to me manly and elegant, and could not be changed without being spoilt. But I conceive when any thing is wrote with a view to publication, that thought gives it a strength of matter, accuracy of correction, and force in the whole, which ordinary discourses may for the most part want. For the truth of my observation relative to yourself, I appeal to your preface which you read me, and which I thought a complete piece,—nor can I help adding that I greatly desire to see it in print. The author of that can easily complete a few sermons which have its strength and spirit, and which I only wish him to do with the same simplicity. A word in his letter gives me hope something of this kind is preparing.

And now that I am talking of sermons, I recollect a word you dropt to me at Wintringham, and which I observe you hint to me at the bottom of your lecture on Matt. v. viz. that what you aim at with your people, is conviction of sin. This is certainly right. But then I have been thinking, as probably there may be some who want more, though you may not know them, and as that end also may be answered by opening the fruits of faith and Gospel holiness, whether going more into that than you seemed to me to have done in those discourses I read, might not be proper. Well, I speak to you with-

out fear, therefore I hope in some love. It seems to me again,—for I often take a trip to your house,—that you was rather rough with that man who was shaving me in the kitchen. What you said was so close at once to his case, that he could not bear it, and grew afraid of you. Suppose we were to talk a little with such in general ; to begin, hint only at the person obliquely, and so remove fear of us, and gain further opportunity ? Somehow or other, I would needs have your people converse with you. You say they do not ; I am fishing for some reason for it in yourself.

We are wont to be foolishly fond of our own children. Fondness is too favourable a name, when what we are in love with is the child of our brain. Yet I cannot help being pleased with the Conversation Scheme, part of which, I mean as much of it as has passed the second time under my hand, you have transmitted herewith. The remainder may be seven or eight other subjects, which will be illustrated in the same practical and experimental manner. About fourscore of my people meet weekly among themselves in little parties, to converse upon these subjects alternately by the week, with an inquiry how they have behaved, and a communication of what they have seen, or suspected, or heard, to be amiss in one or other. The profiting from this exercise has abundantly appeared,—I think beyond any other we have taken up. What you say of that little piece “ Helps to the better knowing of our own hearts,” is but too agreeable to the pride of mine, upon which

subject of pride, I must tell you, that the tickling pleasure which in the beginning, I found about my heart when any thing I did was thought well of, is now I fear, changed into a deep self-opinion. My heart has all the pride of an Eastern monarch, who I suppose when first exalted to the throne, received the prostrations of his subjects with sensible boasting of spirit, but now as if they were really his proper due. But your approbation of that piece will cause you some trouble. With the concurrence of Dr. Guyse's judgment, who it seems, has also seen it, you oblige me to revise and enlarge it, and when that is done you will be called upon to correct. The catechism ¹ is at last finished and sent to London for publication. Your opinion about the "advice to young ministers," determines me to lay it aside, and to hope that the catechism which is now entitled the "Operations of the Spirit," may answer all the purposes that might be expected from making the other public. The printed letter herewith sent cost but a penny, and therefore is little worth. George says it was printed at Lord D's expense. I suppose George writes [to] you ; if so he will be sure to tell you that two or three have made particular application to him. T. Haweis has three or four students joined with him. The state of his parish is very hopeful. Your neighbour Mr. Crooke, wrote me lately to recommend him a curate. I was sorry I could not help him, and much more that there was such a scarcity in the

¹ *Practical Christianity*, No. V.

north. I desire never to forget my friends at Glentworth, and the Archdeacon's right hand, honest John. The days I spent in the north I remember with great pleasure; the testimonies you all so kindly gave me of a christian affection ought to be near my heart. Particularly, I would feel for poor Mrs. Adam, whose afflictions I pray may be sanctified. Yours,

Dear Sir,

In the only bonds,

[S. WALKER.]

CHAPTER XVII.

LETTERS OF MR. WALKER ON DOCTRINAL POINTS—
HIS REMOVAL TO LODGINGS—LORD DARTMOUTH'S
GENEROSITY—HIS OWN AND MR. ADAM'S WRI-
TINGS, &c.—MR. VENN & MR. BURNET—MR.
TALBOT OF KINETON, &c.

LETTER OF MR. WALKER.

THE next specimen of the free epistolary communi-
cation subsisting between Mr. Walker and Mr. Adam,
is a letter of the former, written in the summer of
1759. It explains itself.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

DEAR SIR,

Thank you cordially for stirring me up, to the
exercise of faith in Christ, as the Lord my righteous-
ness. I greatly need quickening on that head;

however I do with all my heart consent to the doctrine, and find no place beside to set my foot on. Pride is not willing to give up all, though it can make good nothing of all it pretends to. Yet it cares not to quit its hold, and I often feel its power, by the effect it brings into my soul ; I mean a certain heaviness and misgiving, though I see not any peculiar reason for it. I have learnt now to suspect without more ado, that self-righteousness is at work, have always found it so on nearer inquiry, and being brought to this most mortifying self-renunciation, have found peace. Dear Sir, do I ever that which the law demands ? And if not, am I not always guilty ? Can the law relax in the least degree from its whole demands ? Could I really approve it if it did ? From beginning to end, I see one and the same thing, that I have no legal title to God's favour,—therefore, must be taken into it another way. And I see no reason to dispute the way God has shewn me ; nay rather, I see all the reason in the world to approve it, because it secures at once, God's honour and my happiness. I could never make much of that distinction between Christ's *active* and *passive* obedience. Set me right if I err. His passive obedience was certainly as active as that which is so called in the distinction. If his passive obedience be reckoned the meritorious cause of forgiveness, and his active, of acceptance, I see no warrant for this in scripture. It seems to me, we are to take the whole of his obedience together for both purposes ; and to look up to him in his exalted state through the merit of his obedience, regally conferring

on all that come to him, the whole benefits of his obedience. As to those who fancy they want only pardon through Christ, but must stand accepted through a righteousness wrought in themselves, they are exceedingly absurd and contradictory, and also have very mean thoughts of God's majesty and law, or very high ones of themselves. Such dangerous mistakes, as far as I can see, arise from a very insufficient use of the law, an ignorance of its high and spiritual demands, as well as of its curse, and of their own hearts. I can hardly think that man a *believer*, who stands in practice on that footing, being unable to understand any thing else by sincerity in that view, but self-righteousness. It is the practice of that word, "God justifieth the ungodly," which alone pacifies conscience and creates love.

The good archdeacon has his trials. They are the parents of true comfort. Christ sits as a refiner. If his corrections do not break us, they cannot purge us. Do not you reckon one great use of affliction, is to make us know ourselves better? Whoever thought himself so proud, self-sufficient, unbelieving, unsubmitive, as he found himself to be when put into the furnace? It is a great thing to be undeceived here. That which mortifies self, is the thing we need.

You provoke me to say all the ill I can of you. I thought I had said all already; but one thing more comes up. It is but the fear of a friendly heart. Is not a concern for your reputation, in some part the reason of your backwardness to appear in print? As to your peculiar constitution, I agree with Mr. Hart-

ley, especially as to the public ministration; but still I think, in private, you should do well to oppose it. My fault is the other way; by inclining to familiarity, I risk my authority. Do not think all your people insensible; hope otherwise, and talk with the most promising on that footing. You may meet with a comfortable circumstance that you did not expect.

What you say about the law, exactly falls in with my plan, and is what I desire to see made public. You *will* have a general sketch of my way of proceeding, in opening the law for conviction, and introducing Christ. You may see it in the enclosed letter, which I desire to put into Mrs. Adam's hands under your correction.¹ What I can say farther, relates only to my apprehension of the four first commandments; which is that the first regards the temper, the second expression thereof in worship, the third expression of it out of worship, the fourth showing it on an appointed time. I am also for the old interpretation of the truth upon St. Paul's authority, Rom. vii. 7.—You will have my word also on 2 Cor. iii. 6. The context does not seem to square with your interpretation. The opposition afterwards made stands between the law and the gospel, not the literal and spiritual meaning of the former. And so it appears to me to do in this 6th verse, which, without consulting commentators, I should understand thus—"God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, of the new not the old;" ministers I say, "not of the letter,"

¹ It is to be regretted that this letter is lost.

the law, Mosaical dispensation, whether moral or ceremonial, “but of the spirit,” the gospel, which I call the spirit, because while the “letter,” the law, killeth by condemning, in every view of it, this, “the spirit,” the gospel, “giveth life” in every kind; justifies, sanctifies, glorifies. I question how far in your sense, the spirit can be said to give life; the law, though spiritually understood, can do no more than condemn. And besides, the same objection lies to interpreting the letter by the literal precept, which in that case does not kill. Your reasonings on Christ’s sermons are to me convincing; he certainly lays home the law to the conscience in the full force of it. Let any man take Christ’s explanation of it, and he will not hold long any hope of God’s favour on a legal title.

I am glad you approve the Conversation Scheme. Before this goes away, it is likely I shall finish it; if so, you will have it herewith. Should you have any corrections, I would have them immediately, because it will soon be printed, as the speediest method of putting it into the hands of those who are desirous of it. Besides, what makes me hasten, is, that Miss —— is now at London, and desires to have it there, where we suppose she will not continue long. You may have heard she has been near death, and will be glad to hear her new principles held her out. Since her recovery, she has had the pleasure of being acquainted with Lord and Lady Dartmouth; of the former she speaks highly, of the latter with hope.—“Helps to

self-knowledge,"¹ you say will cost little trouble to correct. I have laid a plan for considerably enlarging it. The execution will not be practicable but with time. Thank the good archdeacon for forwarding my design in the ordination question. God grant it may answer our wishes ; and I thank you, my dear friend, for your kind intention, of giving me the tracts I desired on Confirmation, but must inform you that I had paid for them before, so Hitch must account to you for them.

What now shall I say, to encourage you to a speedy publication of what you design on the commandments? Only this, that nothing is more wanted. I am put frequently to an utter nonplus in visiting sick persons, and to infinite trouble in talking with awakened people, who have every thing to learn, in the want of such a help. I was mentioning your intentions of the kind, to our " Parson's Club " this day. Mr. Penrose says, there is an excellent exposition of the law, calculated for conviction of sin and bringing to Christ, in Bishop Leighton's works published by Doddridge. But follow your own experience. The application by that means will be closer.

Mrs. Bassett is not singular in desiring to see your lectures on the Scriptures made public. For my part, I agree in her opinion, and we are all of the same mind. One of the club said, would you publish them, he would use them in his church. They

¹ A tract of Mr. Walker's to be found in his " Practical Christianity."

are very striking, and drive me, every word of them, to the fountain opened for sin. It is their great recommendation that they are short; yet they are abundantly full, and give much insight into the mind of the Spirit in the Scriptures. It would do well to send abroad one of the Gospels, with the practical remarks.

You ask after Mr. Vivian's dialogue between a minister and a farmer. They were three papers published in Hayward's scheme, and which Mr. Penrose and I desired might be printed together, with a few alterations and additions. It is a close little piece, very familiar, and remarkably calculated to awaken. You will like it, and be glad your insensible people, as you call them, may have the benefit of reading them.

I had forgot to say above, that I much approve that observation of yours, that they who see not they have broken every one of the commandments, cannot be soundly convinced of sin. This thought must not be lost in what you publish.

You are tired long ago, but must stay awhile longer with me, while I tell you there is a third edition of *The Christian* now in the press, at the joint expense and profit of Dilly and myself. You know the depth of my purse, and that I cannot run the hazard of thirty pounds, which, it seems, will be the cost of the impression. Yet I was never more above water in that respect than now; and that by a strange turn of Providence, which has turned me out of doors as a housekeeper, sent me to lodgings, and

will probably take away the half of my income. Yet it has lessened my expenses, and by putting the current money ; which was wont to go out in the family, into my pocket, made me rich for at least half a year. You will know, Sir, that before I came hither, it was agreed between Mr. —— and me, that I should serve the cure, and have one-half of the income for my maintenance. No sooner was I come hither, and saw the circumstances of the living, than I found our agreement would not go down with the people ; and as the income rises in a manner altogether from voluntary donations, must be to our mutual detriment. I therefore proposed paying my principal a certain annual sum, instead of his half. This was consented to, but with reservation of liberty to return to the original agreement, when he might see fit. This reserved right was insisted on at Christmas last ; by which means my income is not only considerably lessened, but rendered quite precarious. We have had several conversations on this head. I insist on a certainty, as fit for me to do at this time of life, and under my infirmities. Any thing but this Mr. —— is willing to do ; but not this, because it would, he says, put the living out of his power. But “ what will be the issue ? ” you ask. “ Will you have a maintenance ? ” These are questions I cannot answer. All relative to me in this regard is uncertain. But how have I borne, and do I bear this ? I wish you were nearer to sift me. I am, and have been, as one unconcerned. It seldom comes into my thoughts. I

do not find either resentment against him, or anxiety about myself. Can this be right? Is it not rather stupidity? The Lord have mercy upon me, my heart is very deceitful. What perhaps I may say, only has given me trouble, is an old and very fond sister, who has kept house for me, and is now in advanced years obliged to seek another habitation, which we (for we are three brothers) have provided for her in this place. Poor thing! she was brought up in formality, knew nothing of her heart till lately, and I wish she now knew it in a more humbling manner. This business, I believe, has made her see more of herself; but she is not yet brought enough low. Will you think that this affair of mine should be carried all the way to London, and I suppose represented in a light which Mr. ——'s conduct does not deserve? And will you think too, that Lord D. about six weeks ago, sent a bill of twenty five pounds, with a letter which gave me a great deal more comfort than the money? What shall I say to these things? I was never more confounded, than by such an instance of God's care and love. You see I have returned what you call tittle-tattle in kind; but that business in your family is of a more serious nature. Women cannot help themselves, but the Lord can help them. Poor Mrs. Adam! Her outward man decays; I hope it does well with the inner. She has a tender conscience, and knows the importance of eternity. The grand step not only to peace but also holiness, is in despair of any help in ourselves, to lay hold of Christ. Yet to renounce all in this sense is, I am persuaded, more

difficult than any other. Pride is the most obstinate of our sins, and pride of our righteousness the most stubborn of all pride ; it will not give up till the last gasp, yet while it is alive is a fearful tormentor, filling the soul with endless fears, and finding a thousand excuses plausible enough to vindicate itself in doing so. It will yield to nothing but the law spiritually understood and closely applied to the conscience, in the full force of the reverse of that word, " This do and thou shalt live." The best way is to give self-righteousness a fair hearing. Let it make out a claim to God's favour upon a legal footing, if it can. If it cannot, the law speaks but one language. This do, all this, as to time and perfection. Hast thou failed ? Dost thou fail ? Thou art guilty. Nothing remains but death. The law as a witness, jury, and judge, accuses, finds guilty, and passes sentence on every soul of us. The Lord prepare us more abundantly for Christ's coming into our hearts.

Yours in all love,

[S. WALKER.]

In every fresh letter of either of these two worthy correspondents, their light seems to brighten. We now proceed to another from Mr. Walker, which will be sufficiently understood by the reader of the foregoing pages.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

DEAR SIR,

See my design in the illustrations of the subjects of conversation. In the second conversation this question is put, "Have you a practical knowledge of Christ Jesus, as of God, made unto us *Righteousness*?" Suppose it be answered, "I fear I have not." Then query further, "Under the accusations of conscience, the sense of guilt, and fear of death, where do you seek refuge?" If there be any faith at all, the answer will be, "In Christ's righteousness;" and if so, faith however weak is made manifest to the conscience. The same interrogatory may confound presumption. I meant greatly to help the doubting; therefore say in the introduction to these illustrations, you may discover *how far*. I should be sorry to give pain where I intended to minister comfort, and therefore have sent your caution, in your words nearly, to London to be added in its place.¹ Thank you for your correction, and speedy return of your answer. You are put to hard shifts to find something like a reason for not appearing in print. Mediocrity (if that were the case, which nevertheless no one will think so but yourself) is no excuse for keeping at home when you may be useful abroad. And I am sure, had I seemed to decline through want of ability to excel, you would have

¹ This has been mentioned before in noticing the "Helps to Conversation."

stopt my mouth in a word, with "The Gospel stands not in the wisdom of man but the power of God." Set against the reasonings of shame the sober reflection, that the gifts you have are of God's giving, and bestowed on you for his use; that the world has need of them such as they are; that it is wrong to lessen them, the giver and design considered, and that yourself are the least capable of judging what they are. I remember poor Daracott laid it closely on you and me, in my return from Wintringham, that we should both repeatedly appear in public, because he thought others of our brethren not clear. Thought I, when Canon first proposed printing, "What I in print! I am not fit." "Nay, but these sermons may be of use," replied he, "and you must be content to be accounted a fool." There was no room for gainsaying. Well, I refer the matter to a capable judge, and rest it there. So Providence opened a way to my laying it before Dr. Guyse, who determined with my friend.

Rest nothing on my judgment. I can only say your readings make me feel, from whence I conclude they may have the same effect on others. To us here, you are wonderfully intelligible in your brevity. Our consciences make us understand you. Whoever have the unction cannot miss your aim. In the publication I propose, the whole text may be printed, otherwise there will be a difficulty in the perusal by going forward and backward from one book to the other, which will be troublesome as well as disturbing. A chapter to be read in this way in a family,

will be very practicable at one time, and very instructive. By all means let your observations follow the words of Scripture in the same line, as they do in the copy you have sent me, and not be thrown out into the margin, or set at the foot of the page. By a different letter or otherwise, they may, and should be, distinguished from the text. It will I hope do me some good to see the whole; and I shall be glad to know to whose judgment you intend to submit them, for I desire you will make no account of mine. While I was writing the last words, a young shoemaker, a good youth, but only able to read and write, though I must own of good parts, came in. I made him hear me read Eph. II. with your remarks, and perfectly without the least difficulty, he understood you at once. What will the Archdeacon say to this? I am heartily glad you intend to fix your preface to the beginning of the epistle. It will be well meant at least, to recommend this way to our brethren in the preface to the gospel.

These years past, it has been my determination to stick by the work here, unless God should plainly call me from it. There is not much likelihood that the present difficulty shall drive me. While I have food and raiment it ought not, and by grace shall not. We are not however nearer an accommodation. Indeed it would search me to leave Truro. My children are very near me. And besides, God is making use of me to others besides those in this place. Over and above this, my strength seems hardly sufficient to endure going over again what I have done here.

George ¹ still has poor health. We here are for his removal, but George demurs. What think you of having him for a neighbour? Mr. Venn is presented to Huddersfield in Yorkshire, (by the map, it should be near Leeds) and has requested his assistance. There is one main difficulty. He must have the care of a school. Our first acquaintance with this is by the post to-day. We shall answer immediately, and he will decide. We fear his health greatly where he is, yet things seem promising, and it is a barren land.

By his way of expressing himself, he would incline to go, were he not doubtful if with a good conscience he might engage in a school. But as Mr. Venn proposes to lay him under no restraint, and he may continue only as he sees fit, I fancy he will determine to be in your neighbourhood."

The observations in the first of these letters, on Christ as "the Lord our Righteousness," are truly characteristic of the soundness and accuracy of their author. Few things are more detrimental to the truth, than fine-spun distinctions without definite meaning, or scriptural warrant. The church has abounded in them in all ages, to the great hindrance of many a sincere inquirer. Nor is there any point about which men have had greater *verbal* differences, than concerning our justification through the righteousness of Christ. This being an essential doctrine, ought to be stated with clearness and precision.

¹ Mr. Burnet.

Through the atonement of Christ, believers have restored to them what Adam lost—eternal life and holiness. To effect this, it appears that two things were necessary to be removed—the *guilt* of sin, and the *pollution* of sin. The former is taken away by the sufferings of Christ our surety as the *penalty*, and by his obedience as the *fulfilment* of the violated but unalterable law of God. The latter is destroyed in the work of sanctification by His Spirit, progressive here, perfected in glory. Hence Christ is in all respects “The Lord our Righteousness.” His sufferings may for distinction be called *passive*, his obedience, *active*; but our justification is through both. What he suffered was the penalty for us; but he also obeyed the precept for us, and by both together we obtain the imputation of that perfect righteousness, which entitles the faithful to the kingdom of heaven. There is no entering into life till we have kept the commandments;¹ but as we are unable to keep them ourselves, it was necessary that our surety should keep them for us.² Thus, as Mr. Walker observes, we must take the whole together; while the idea of an *inherent* righteousness as a ground of acceptance, is one of the most awful errors into which a man can fall. If inherent righteousness can save, it must be perfect; and who would dare to build a hope upon such a foundation? We may observe also that as our sin was not *inherently* in Christ, but by way of *imputation*, so is his righteousness with respect to us

¹ Matt. xix. 17. ² Rom. iii. and Rom. x.

as a ground for doing away the judicial sentence of the divine condemnation. *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*¹ They therefore only are secure, who can say *Christ is all.*

It is time, however, to recal the attention to other interesting topics of Mr. Walker's letters to Mr. Adam, the latter of whom was, it seems, upon the eve of following his friend's advice to print his expositions, and was anxious to have the advantage of a preface written by him. It will be recollected, that Mr. Adam had acceded to a similar request made to him by Mr. Walker, for his admirable work *The Christian*. But curiously enough, this good man now makes for himself the very same modest excuses, he blamed in the previous exhortations he had sent to Wintringham, as will be seen in a letter, which contains a most valuable account of the character and proceedings of Mr. Talbot, of Kineton, as well as allusion to Mr. Cruden, who was perhaps the most singular compound of insanity and soundness that ever existed.²

¹ 2 Cor. v. 21.

² See the curious life of this extraordinary man, prefixed to his *Concordance*.

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

July 25, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

I am not able to pay you what I am in your debt, and plead bankrupt. Seriously, I am in no way fitted to write a preface to your book. What I could say, would be so flat as to be far from a recommendation. My friends here are not the men you take them for. Two of them are honest, but not deep ; one of the other two has read much, but wants judgment ; he only that would be qualified for such a thing, is neither hearty nor knowing. Mr. Talbot, of Kington, in Warwickshire, who was in our college in my days, has been long searching with diligence and simplicity. By what I can gather, he began with the law ; then the Moravians came in his way, and a year or two ago, he was settled by Romaine. T. Haweis, who lately spent a week at Kington, gives him a most extraordinary character, which I cannot help transcribing to comfort and quicken you. “ July 16, 1759, Oxford. I am just now returned from Mr. Talbot’s. I was with him a week. He lives at Kington, in Warwickshire. His living is nothing in value, but most laborious in service. He took it merely with a view to do good, having that desire in great simplicity, before he could be at all said to be evangelical, which he has been about a twelvemonth or more. He had always a doctrinal knowledge of the scheme, but till then, no inward experimental acquaintance

with it. He has two churches, mother and daughter church, the value of both together being 28*l.* per annum, two miles distant. His vicarage houses at both places are thatched cottages, which cost him their value in repairs, and his own house almost takes away in rent, the whole income of his living. He has also handsomely new-built the church, chiefly at his own expence. His temper being naturally generous, he is abundantly munificent. He preaches twice a day at the mother church, and once at the daughter, besides an evening exposition of the Scripture at his own house for as many as will come. Thursday, he preaches in the church. Tuesday, he has a public exposition in his house, two rooms of which are fitted with forms, a desk, mats, and all the other necessaries. Morning and evening, he constantly prays, expounds Scripture, and sings in his family. He is cried out against as a Methodist by most of the clergy, but is quite sound from all leaning that way. He has an excellent woman for his wife, but no children. His parts are strong, judgment piercing, heart open, zeal great, simplicity most astonishing. His work prospers. I suppose forty or fifty persons seriously concerned about their souls, and a great impression evident upon them. But is he established? Judge yourself what a man must be who determines to ride more than two hundred miles, to get a thorough acquaintance with the work.

“ Expect him the first week in September. Expect him where? Why at Truro. He must be at the assizes at Warwick, or he would be with you sooner.

He intends to stay with you three weeks, that he may take a thorough view, and enter into the spirit of your method. But now while I am speaking this, do not let me be a snare to you. I believe from the bottom of my heart, you have no good thing from which you may not take shame to yourself, and many evil ones which should still deeply humble you. When you see him, he will tell you more of himself than I can think of. His connections with multitudes of the great, were most intimate and familiar, and the intimacy still continues, though he sees them now but seldom. He will give you hints perhaps of his freedom with them, which will surprise you. He seems most dead to the world respecting its esteem among those who were his former snares, but like others, will be in danger of making the serious world supply their place; but at present he is an astonishing instance of the power of divine grace. To give you an account of the whole will be needless; when you see him you will be highly pleased." And now, Sir, what say you? Put your foot in the stirrup, and come away. I have the authority of a good physician, to whom I communicated your case, to tell you that nothing is so likely to do you service, as a long journey. If I find him fit, shall I not ask him to write a preface?

What end will be answered by an apology for printing? Such as like your book will not need it, and they that do not will not mind it. It is apology enough that you desire to cast in your mite. To take occasion of recommending expositions of Scrip-

ture, will be doing a good work. You do not propose your own method, but the thing. The proposal doth not degrade from the present method of preaching from a particular text, which has its special use by affording opportunity of opening distinctly and improving a doctrine. But then exposition also seems to me to have its special use, by taking in larger portions of Scripture at once, shewing the connection, and besides the particular benefit that may be hoped for from the minister's labour, rendering the people more apt to improve the Scriptures in their private use of them. It would at the same time shew the people our concern for them, because somewhat more than ordinary, afford abundant opportunities of striking at special vices from Scripture authority, and perhaps beget a concern for their souls, by divine grace, in our people. It must be allowed also to have its use in respect of ourselves, by suggesting perpetual matter of self-inquiry, &c. furnishing us with greater knowledge of the Scripture, and making us better qualified for other ministerial work, if not also more disposed to it.

Is it worth while to spend time, thought, and paper, in obviating objections, that have their foundation in indifference, sloth, or ignorance?

If you determine to print with the whole text, do not think of writing again the copy. The printer can easily supply what is wanting. If your printer makes difficulties, I engage my Christian friend, Mr. Cruden, an experienced corrector of the press, will gladly undertake to get it done, and that it be done

exactly. If you please, send the copy to him for conveyance to me, and I shall not fail having it without delay. Direct to Mr. Alexander Cruden, at Mr. Keen's, Glazier, in Basinghall Street, near London Wall, London. Your bookseller at Hull, will easily transmit it to him.

And now, Sir, what shall I say of your decaying state of health? You have a tender conscience, and Satan will be busy. Are you past the fear of death, and longing in submission to the divine will, to be with Christ? This I have been labouring after with some diligence, and at times encouragement. The grand adversaries are unbelief and consequent aptness to cleave to life, partly through want of full assurance of faith, and partly through present attachment. But I doubt not your faith is steadfast, and your victory over the world clear. In which view I can cordially rejoice over you, and commend you to the Lord with comfort and confidence. It has pleased God to take from my head some helpers nearer home, particularly Petrie and Vowler. I beseech him in mercy to us, myself in particular, spare you. Yet methinks, I am more importunate that you may be enabled to adorn the Gospel, by a Christ-like temper under every afflictive dispensation. My hearty affectionate respects to dear Mrs. Adam. I hope and trust she finds increasingly that peace in Christ, which I am absolutely sure she will find less from herself, the more she knows what she is. The

everlasting arms be underneath you both, is the prayer of, dear Sir,

Your's in all affection,

[S. WALKER.]

Mr. Conon gives his love to you.

The Mr. Talbot mentioned in this letter, was truly devoted to the service of vital piety. He, as will be seen hereafter, was for a time the host of Mr. Walker, during his absence from Truro on account of the illness which terminated in his death. Though of the best connections, religion had subdued in him every desire of temporal influence, which he could not make subservient to the cause of Christ. The world called him a *Methodist*, and a *Dissenter*; but he was one of the excellent men who helped to preserve the fabric of our Church from decaying, in a damp and dreary night of apathy and error. From the history of his proceedings given by Mr. Haweis, it might almost be imagined that many a zealous clergyman in these days, had taken them for a pattern. To such men, it is repeated, and not to the *irregulars*, does our Church, under Providence, owe its present effectiveness, and probably its very existence as a National Establishment.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LETTERS OF MR. WALKER ON THE VISITS OF MR. TALBOT AND MR. ROMAINÉ TO TRURO—HIS SUBSCRIPTION SCHEME—ARCHDEACON BASSET, &c.—MR. ADAM'S AND THE ARCHDEACON'S OPINIONS OF THE SCHEME—PROSPECT OF INVASION.

AUTUMN OF 1759.

IN the autumn of 1759, Mr. Walker had the satisfaction of welcoming Mr. Talbot to Truro. He had also the unexpected gratification of a visit from Mr. Romainé. The account he sent to Mr. Adam, will convey the best idea of the happiness their presence afforded him, and of the causes which induced them to come to him. His letter commences with some solemn and valuable observations on the state of a believer's mind in the dying hour, which arose out of remarks made by Mr. Adam.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

Oct. 11th, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

To no purpose do I search for your last favour ; it is not to be found. I regret the loss the rather, because of a passage in it that gave me encouragement. The dying hour is an awful one ; unbelief, however, gives it the terror. I agree with you that the joyful frame of heart at that time is not the *criterion*, and wish to have my daily testimony with me in a life of faith, while I am able to serve the interests of Christ. Yet it is a glorious thing to see a guilty sinner when on the point of being taken to judgment, triumphing over death through the faith of Jesus, and in that happy manner concluding a life spent in his service. That I am a sinner, I certainly know ; that there is no hope for me but in the Redeemer, I am perfectly satisfied ; but I want to have the grounds of his salvation as they lie in the Scriptures made plain to me, and its great truths confirmed more abundantly in my heart. When I stagger, it is because I am not sufficiently stedfast in my belief that these things are so, and experience shews me that as belief of their reality is established on my mind, I am set proportionably above fear and above the world. We have given too much credit to man's testimony respecting the things of God, which being radically insufficient, since the things of God are known only to himself, what is built upon

it totters when brought to the touch. The self-condemned sinner cannot be satisfied but on the sure grounds of God's testimony: as he gets that, he sets to his seal that God is true, and holds up his head though the law, conscience, and the devil be against him, and that in the dying hour, as well as on other occasions.

Mr. Talbot first, and then Mr. Romaine and G. Burnet, have engrossed my whole time since the last week of August, when the former came to us, and tarried with us a month. I cannot express the esteem I have of him. With all the delicacy of a man of quality, and as much quick and strong sense as I ever met with, he is surprisingly humble, diffident of his own judgment, and teachable; into which he has been led by long and deep distress of mind under the sense of sin, and out of which he is as yet but imperfectly delivered. He is, indeed, much dead to the world in every view of it, and seems possessed by an apostolic zeal for the honour of our Master. His manner in conversation is so happy, that he really says the freest things, without raising the least anger in those he is talking to. I trust he has been blest to us; for my own part, every thing about him confounded my pride, and was some sort of a balance to that inbred and contracted conceit of mine, which had but too much fuel afforded it by a visit from such a man. O Sir, what cause of condemnation have I from that quarter!

He is returned, and I find got safe to Kington, in a full purpose to attempt what may be done in the most

regular and inoffensive manner, and in a view of leading his brethren about him to exert themselves. He has, in these later years, made it his business to hear and converse with persons of every sort, the better to form his judgment how things were going on, and of the part himself ought to act. The issue is a determination to keep close to the discipline of mother Church. We had much conversation on this head to my satisfaction. In consequence of certain apprehensions he had conceived lest some should *go out*, as they now term it, I had proposed a scheme that had been some time in my head, which might possibly contribute to our greater establishment and usefulness in this day of small things. When Mr. Romaine came, a day or two after Mr. Talbot left us, I thought, or rather found it necessary to communicate what we had been proposing to him. The design of his visit, quite unexpected by me till he was come, and unthought of by him till the day before his setting out, was to consult upon his present very critical circumstances at St. Dunstan's. While his opposers, the vicar and vestry, probably with a view of going farther, have actually prevented him from preaching there during the long vacation, upon the words of White's will, who gave the lecture, his too hot friends have been, he says to a man, pressing him to come out, engaging to build a chapel. Between the both his trial was not small; and the rather, because none in London will permit him to preach in their pulpits. Hence, he was almost ready to conclude, that were he turned out of St. Dunstan's, he should

get no employment in the establishment. In these uncomfortable circumstances, he told his friends he would come down and consult me, because he knew I was in his opinion for sticking to the Church. [I feel a twinge of pride this moment.] We talked over the matter fully. He is determined to stick fast, and to wait. He sees his friends are in a bad spirit. He will not engage in a lawsuit against the vicar and vestry; if his friends will, they may. He will not, I hope, publish his case, which he had resolved to do. On the whole, he is gone home in pretty good spirits, after a stay of only two days with us. I thought the scheme I had been hinting to Mr. Talbot was suited to strengthen Mr. Romaine's hands, therefore told him I had thought of such a thing, and what had passed between Mr. Talbot and myself about it. We agreed it should be recommended to your judgment, and that if you approved it, you should draw up the plan in a proper manner. When I say recommended to your judgment, I include the archdeacon. Meantime, Mr. Romaine would have me commit what I had thought of to paper. I did [so] in a rude manner,¹ and it was agreed that I should communicate

¹ His rough sketch is as follows. It must be remembered, however, that it does not profess to be more than a *rough outline*.

"Hints for a Scheme more effectually to carry on the work of reformation at this time begun in divers parts of the kingdom, under regular ministers of the Church of England."

That as many clergymen as are willing, do consent unto and determine to proceed upon, the following resolutions.

to you, and send these hints also to Mr. Talbot, which I have done. George has carried them to Mr. Venn, and Mr. Romaine has taken them in his pocket to consult others.

You will weigh the matter on either side. The main design is this, to preserve regularity ; thereby to promote union and gain weight to the cause ; to remove needless objections, and open a way to others to engage in concert for the interests of religion. Is there any thing in this ? Is such a thing justifiable in ministers of this Established Church ? Is it prudent ?

1. That the Church of England, both in her doctrines and discipline, is such as they are satisfied with ministering therein, with a quiet conscience.

2. That they will preach the doctrines of the same, as set forth in the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy.

3. That they will avoid all irregularities in their ministrations, confining themselves within the limits set them by the discipline of the Church.

The necessity of which resolutions seems to appear, among other reasons,

1. Because they think themselves bound unto such declaring the doctrines of the Church of England, as because they are assured the salvation of their hearers, under God, depends upon such declaration of the Gospel, so especially, because they apprehend the purity of these doctrines of the Gospel and of the Church of England, has been sadly corrupted.

2. Because they think themselves bound, as ministers of the Church of England, and thereby in some sort guardians of her discipline, to act within the limits prescribed them by the discipline of the Church, having consented so to do when they sought and received their orders from her.

3. Because it may be necessary that all who are willing, should be satisfied of the simplicity of their designs, and that

Is signing it proper? I shewed the scheme to a neighbouring clergyman, who approved the thing, but thought the signing it would have an air of assuming; and advised rather, that the names of all consenters should be mutually communicated, and that a number of such papers should be printed, and [be placed] in the hands of every consenter, who should subscribe his own name only, should it be published.

You will take notice that the paper sent you is but a hint; the form and matter are left to you, if you shall approve the thing. In that case do not decline doing it. Your age puts you forward for it, and I

they have no purpose of undermining the Church, but on the contrary, of supporting it.

4. Because it may be proper they should make the difference manifest between themselves, and such of our brethren as have gone into irregularities, to the end that the people under their several cures and others, may not remain under fear that they mean to lead them into irregular proceedings, and such as are not authorized by the discipline of the Church.

5. Because it is their duty to remove, as far as is in their power, any suspicions which might otherwise lie upon the minds of any of their brethren, the regular clergy, concerning them, and to engage them to exert themselves in their several cures, in the same desirable work.

In the force of such considerations, they have thought it proper to sign the above resolutions, as well that the vindication of their conduct may be at hand, as that others of their regular brethren, seeing what are their real inclinations, may correspond with them.

They desire every subscriber may have a copy hereof with him, to be communicated to any inquirer as need shall be.

They wish any clergyman, who is disposed, may enter into their views, by adding his name to theirs.

know no one else can do it with like caution and foresight. You will not be puffed up. Your gifts are God's giving, nor must you deny the having them, or Him the use of them when he calls for them.

I have heard nothing of your Readings, but hope they are on the way. Brother Talbot has not yet eyesight enough to usher them into the world; should they go abroad I will surely tell you all my heart about them. A second edition of my little Catechism is required.

Yours in all love,

[S. WALKER.]

In a short time after the date of this communication, Mr. Walker wrote again to Mr. Adam. It will be best to introduce that letter, previously to any explanation of the nature of the important topics contained in the last, in order that the valuable reply of Mr. Adam may be fully understood.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

Oct. 22, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

Your Readings are come to my hands, of which I am desired to inform you by a note put in with them. I shall be expecting to hear from you in answer to my last, which inclosed a thought towards a scheme

for rendering the work now carrying on among the regular clergy, more successful.

George Burnet left us this day fortnight and Bristol Tuesday last, for Mr. Talbot's, whence he intended setting out for Huddersfield about this day. He will need your counsel, and will come over to consult you when he has taken a little time to look about on the state of things there, which I fancy are such as will demand a good deal of prudence. There is an old society of John Wesley's in the parish. It will be a nice matter neither to quarrel nor join with them. They are in our parts hot, and must be treated with much forbearance. A story has reached me which I suppose has its foundation in this temper, that the Archdeacon of Stow is publicly persecuting them. A word on that head from you, will put it in my power to remove a prejudice which lies on one of my friends that has heard this.

You will be very glad to hear that Mr. Haweis is very successful at Oxford, in his parish, and with some of the younger members of the university. Our friend Jane stands heartily by him, but is miserably low in body. The great ones there are growing jealous; but things are so managed, that it will not be easy for them to rid their hands of those who turn the world upside down.

God be praised we here still go forward. About twenty young persons have within these six months been brought under a serious concern for their souls; of several of them I have very encouraging hopes. Otherwise I think we lie under a sad security, and

are not so much as angry at whatever is said. This is terrible. But the effect in regard of us is peace, and that is peculiarly dangerous on our side.

For my own part, I have to be thankful for some quickening in these latter months. I find it very difficult and very desirable to walk closely with God. Pride has been hunting me grievously at times, and forced me to many a *miserere*. I suspect indulging it, but am sure I do not hate it, nor am humbled for it as I ought.

You have been thinking of us in this threatening hour, as lying nearer the coast. What I have felt on the occasion has not been fear, but some desire that God may be glorified by it being made a means of our reformation, if it takes place.

I know not; but seemingly, I do not think we are a jot more safe for our fleets and armies, and the invasion appears to me both practicable and probable. The Lord only knows how I am prepared for it. What alarms me most is, that I see none alarmed by the threatening to think of their sins.

How is my friend's health? Has not this hot summer been hard upon you? O, Sir, how soon shall we both be in eternity! I find decay steals on. What a stupidity, that the inner man is not renewed proportionably! I beg my cordial respects to Mrs. Adam, and earnestly pray that the peace of God may keep you both, being in the nearest bonds,

Dear Sir,

Yours,

[S. WALKER.]

To Mr. Walker's inquiries respecting his Subscription Scheme, Mr. Adam replied in the following judicious letter.

To the Rev. S. Walker.

DEAR SIR,

First for your Association or Subscription Scheme. You must bear with a full and free dissent. In my opinion, it will be considered as an open declaration of war, increase, and strengthen the opposition, and in a word, set all in a flame without any good effect that I can perceive, to counterbalance the great clamour that will be raised upon the occasion. We are not wanting in bringing our testimony, and the difference is sufficiently observed, so things may very well rest as they are without injury to the conscience, or cowardice in the cause of our Master. If our preaching and conduct do not witness for us, that under him we are true members and ministers of the Established Church, no declarations or protestations of ours will be available; and if the contrary imputation is cast upon us, it is better to leave the issue quietly to him under a sense of having done our duty, than needlessly to provoke more reproach and contempt, which I apprehend would be the consequence of the proposed subscription. This is my real sense of the matter. It seems to me that a much greater handle will be given by such a combination, to traduce some as separatists and dissenters, than has been

given yet, or I hope ever will. It is a principal part of your design to confirm those who may be feared to be wavering, but what reason have you to think that such a tie, as you suppose, will hold them faster than *present engagements*? And besides, would not this in some measure be allowing the suppositions already conceived of them, to be well grounded? Think again, and if you conclude me fearful, let me know it. It is endless to set down the several articles of your scheme, with my opinion subjoined to each, having thus given it in general. Thus far I had written before I sent your paper to the Arch-deacon, who writes as follows.¹

You want to have the grounds of Christ's Salvation, as they lie in Scripture, made more plain to you, and its great truths confirmed more abundantly in your heart, and say you are sometimes staggering in weakness. Now I believe it is an essential part of Faith, and a comfortable proof of its existence, never to think we have enough of it. Every man is a miser in what he thinks his treasure, and his bent is to increase it. I have many a fellow feeling of your perplexity, and will tell you how I make a shift to relieve myself. If any one was to open his case to me, just as I find my own to be, I verily think, I should bid him be of good comfort; and why then in like circumstances should I not take it to myself? The promises are under seal in Scripture, and faith

¹ The letter was enclosed, and an extract will be given presently.

is not a whit the less given us from above, when in a sense of their suitableness to our needs, we exert our strength, and call up our own reason to lay hold of them. This was Abraham's faith; and thus we give glory to God. I remember you taught me something of this lesson when you was here. I fear we hinder our prayers by a needless suspecting of our ground, and not going to work in the strength of what we have got, because perhaps it does not tally with the experience or higher attainments of others. Look here for some of your pride.

The Archdeacon's persecuting the Methodists is news to me. About two years ago, a woman who had always been attached to them, brought a Methodist preacher into the parish, was hot in the cause, and prevailed with some of the best of his flock to hear him. Mr. B. was roused upon the occasion, and shewed a good deal of spirit, but not in the way of persecution, unless they call his opposing him so; and as to persecution by words, they are more than even with him. The woman soon came to him again, and I have heard nothing of the matter since. A certain lady, the other day, plainly told Mrs. B. she was a Methodist, which she would hardly have done, if it was known her husband was persecuting them. By all means ply Mr. R[omaine] with advice to stand fast. His road is waiting and patient suffering; and desertion of the Church, of which he has otherwise a good opinion, on account of hardships, will be nothing but resentment, and can never have a good issue, or give him comfort on cool reflection.

I hope Mr. B. will not repent of his going to H[uddersfield,] and shall be glad to see him here. You have cause to rejoice, particularly at Mr. H.'s success; and should think it your duty to praise God for being an instrument (only remember that) of sending such a labourer into the vineyard. Though I see little fruit here, I am as much marked as if I had a great deal; but what I want chiefly to tell you is, that with a full share of pride, I can, and do rejoice at his and yours, in addition to the common stock. Every year gives me warning of decay, as you may judge from what I told you of the state of my nerves, especially in hot weather. I do not perceive that I have any alarming fears. There are many aching hearts at present about the invasion, though few reflect what occasion we have for so sharp a medicine. God's remedies are very nauseous, and must be so to have an effect. If the French do land, they will commit great ravages, and their progress is at the will of the great Disposer. It would be happy for us, if our fears worked the right way, and disposed us to want them less.

My wife, though still weak, I thank God is better, I hope inwardly, notwithstanding complaints of darkness in the point of assurance. My best respects to Mr. C.

Whose I am in the same Bonds with you,
[THOS. ADAM.]

Archdeacon Basset was of the same opinion with Mr. Adam, to whom he says, in his letter on the

subject, “ Mr. Walker is greatly to be commended in his zeal, in the Scheme he has proposed for the doctrine of the Church of England ; and I wish that more of the clergy were animated by the same spirit. Nevertheless I cannot approve of this Scheme, either as to the propriety of it, or the consequences which might attend it, were it to be put in execution. I cannot see that a *private* subscription would bind the consciences of the clergy more than a *public* one. King, Lords, and Commons are guarantees to the latter, and have it in their power to enforce it if they please. But what guarantee is there for a private subscription ? And then, as to the consequences which may possibly attend it, I had rather they should be discovered by your own judgment, than mentioned by me.”

Mr. Walker does seem certainly, in this instance, to have propounded a plan, the effects of which he had not calculated with his customary foresight. This arose from his earnest desire of union among the clergy, as the only means to ensure their usefulness and comfort. But ministers of the Establishment *do* stipulate by public avowal, that they will adhere to its rules and preach its doctrines. If they break these solemn promises, they incur unspeakable responsibility ; and there can be no private bond of a higher nature than the open declaration already made. Every such attempt, therefore, must be prejudicial, as Mr. Adam and his friend, the good archdeacon, wisely perceived. It is impossible to rate the standard with which our Church is favoured at too high

a value ; for the more we reflect upon its former and present uses, the more clearly its cementing power appears. But for this, the men to whom, by the divine blessing, the revival of the last century was owing, would have been almost all shaken off by the persecuting spirit of the times ; and in our days, the pillar on which is suspended the pandect of our faith has become the support of the sanctuary. The difficulties in which the venerable Romaine was involved, and under the pressure of which he came to Truro, would have severed him from the Establishment, had he not reflected that in leaving it, he should be turning his back, for personal causes, on the great depository of truth, which was calculated to become his country's safeguard, and a blessing to the world. We need no other bond of external union ; all that is wanted is, more of the uniting spirit of vital Christianity.

CHAPTER XIX.

MR. WALKER'S LAST SERMON AT TRURO—HIS ILLNESS, AND REMOVAL TO BRISTOL HOTWELLS—HIS KIND RECEPTION IN THE HOUSE OF LORD DARTMOUTH, AT BLACKHEATH.

DECAY OF MR. WALKER'S CONSTITUTION.

SUCH as has been hitherto described, was the course of Mr. Walker ; but in the unfathomable mysteries of Providence, his sun was destined to go down while it was yet day, and never did it beam forth rays of more celestial loveliness, than just before it was for ever hidden from human eyes in the shadow of death. His unwearied labour and perpetual anxieties had long acted with an injurious pressure on his frame, and for some time before the final wreck of his constitution, he found himself giving way under the weight of daily toil. He felt at times so unequal to the arduous task before him, that he contemplated a temporary cessation from it ; but was urged on be-

yond the strength of a too willing spirit by some, who for his sake and their own, ought to have recommended him to seek a renewal of vigour in repose. On the 27th of April, 1760, his voice for ever ceased to proclaim the mysteries of salvation, from the pulpit of the church at Truro. Though unconscious that he should never again speak to his beloved congregation, there was in his manner of address an unusual degree of emotion, and he seemed filled with joyful anticipations of his own rest from all trials, and with even more than ordinary longing for the souls of his people. The Sunday before, his subject was the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God, and his last sermon was on his coming thence to judge the earth. He described with all the feeling of one prepared to meet his God, those triumphant expectations of the Lord's second coming, which animated his own pious breast, and accompanied these declarations of a hope full of immortality, with most solemn warnings and exhortations to the careless and impenitent.

“ I mean,” said he, with a glow of joy that seemed to cause forgetfulness of all bodily infirmity, “ to express my hope, expectation, and waiting desire of that day. I regard it as the day of my Lord's eminent triumph, when he shall come in the glory of the Father with great power and unequalled majesty, attended by the hosts of heaven, and all nature bowing before him ; when by the workings of his mighty power, the dead shall arise from the various distributions of their dust, and with the assembled living,

stand, a vast multitude which no man can number, before his seat, to own and honour, whether willingly or not, the once despised Lamb. When the fallen angels too shall be brought up to adorn his appearance, and receive their final doom from his mouth ; when he shall be admired in all them that believe, because of the adorable work he shall have wrought for them and in them ; and upon such as would not obey his gospel, he shall get himself glory infinitely surpassing that, when he destroyed so many of his naughty enemies in the depths of the Red Sea : when every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him shall own that he is no other than the crucified Jesus ; when by his royal word he shall pronounce the sentences never to be recalled ; by his omnipotency shut up the damned in the caverns of hell for a miserable eternity, and bid a new heaven and earth to come forth, furnished and provided with every circumstance of greatness, glory, and beauty, to receive for ever his happy saints. Can I think of this day so honourable to him whom my soul loveth, without longing and wishing for its appearance ? And when I consider that his people shall partake with him in the glories of that day ; hearing his voice, shall come forth victorious over death, the last enemy, decked in all the brightness, strength, and glory of a spiritual body ; with their own eyes behold their Lord avenging himself upon his enemies and theirs, by an utter destruction, and hear him say to them these ravishing words, never to be recalled, *come ye blessed of my Father*—can I do other than say, *come Lord*

Jesus, come quickly! Surely I should rejoice to see and be for ever with the Lord; to behold his beauty as the express image of his Father's person; to contemplate with endless and insatiable transport, the glory which the Father hath given him; to make my acknowledgment, in the praises of heaven, among the multitude which no man can number, as saved, for ever saved, by his love and care, his power and grace. What! when the least beam of his glory let in upon my soul turns my earth into heaven, and makes me cry out with Peter, '*it is good for us to be here,*' can I wish to delay his coming? When, remaining in this vale of misery I groan under corruption, and am burdened with a corruptible body, can I say, this is better than to be fashioned in soul and body like unto the Lord? When I find here nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit, shall I be averse to the Lord's coming to change my sorrows into joy unspeakable and full of glory? Here, beset as I am with enemies, would I not long for that blessed day when I shall see them again no more for ever? And would I not be glad to be taken from a world lying in wickedness, into the new heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? I know that my Redeemer liveth; I know that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; I have humble confidence that he will own me among the children; and shall I, like those who know no better joys than this world can afford them, are ignorant of a Redeemer's righteousness, and lie under the unconscious guilt of unnumbered and unpardoned sins;

shall I, like them, cleave to this base life as my all for happiness, and not wait, and wish, and long for the day of my Master's glorious appearance? No, I will not abide in that low measure of faith, which only begets a hope that I may be well when the Lord comes, but knows not what it is *to love the day of his appearance*. My endeavour shall be to be *strong in the faith*, and *abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost*; *always fruitful in good works*, and *hasting unto the day of the Lord*. Hold out faith, and come Lord Jesus."

While the saint-like minister now ripening for eternal glory, affirmed his own exultant expectation of the day of Christ's appearance, his last words were those of remonstrance and entreaty to such as would not be partakers of his joys. "To be plain, I am grieved at heart for many, very many of you, to think how you will make your appearance before Christ's judgment seat. You have no works to speak there for your belonging to Christ; I can see none. I see works of various kinds that prove you do not belong to him. If a life of pleasure, idleness, indulgence, drunkenness, pride, covetousness, would recommend you to the favour of the judge, few would be better received than numbers of you. In the name of God, my friends, when you know this moment in your own consciences, that if, as you have been and are, you should be called to judgment, you would be as surely cast into hell, as if you were already scorching in those dreadful flames, why will you live at such a rate?—Well, we shall be all before the judgment

seat of Christ together ! there the controversy between me, persuading you by the terrors of the Lord, and you determined to abide in your sins, will be decided. There it will appear whether your blood will be upon your own heads for your obstinate impenitence, or upon mine for not giving you warning. Christ will certainly either acquit or condemn me on this account ; and if I should be acquitted herein, what will become of you ? I tremble to think how so many words of mine will be brought up against you on that day. What will you say, what will you answer, how will you excuse yourselves ? O sirs, if you will not be prevailed upon, you will with eternal self-reproach curse the day that you knew me, or heard one word from my mouth. Why, why, will you die with so aggravated a destruction ? Oh, think of the judgment ; think of it, and you will not be able to hold it out against your own souls. May the Lord incline you to do so ; may he cause this word to sink deep into your hearts ; may he shew you all your danger ; and with an outstretched arm, bring you out of the hands of the devil, and translate you into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son, to his own glory, and your unspeakable happiness in the day of the appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ! Even so, most mighty God, and most merciful Father, for the same Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

This awakening appeal seemed like the foreboding of a speedy end to the solemn duties of his sacred office ; and a more touching close was never given to the ministry of any man, nor can there be produced

a nobler specimen of the eloquence of a Christian triumphing in his own blissful anticipations, and grieving over those who had not believed his report. His eye of faith could pierce through the gloom of death and the grave, and enjoy a glimpse of that crown radiant with the light of heaven, which awaited him in glory ; while all that imparted hue of mourning to the funeral pall, the shroud, and the silence of the tomb, was the conviction that he should become a witness in the great day, against those thoughtless sinners over whose salvation he yearned and wept in the bowels of Jesus Christ. Here we see at once the sublimity and tenderness of the grace of God : a tear of love bedewed the eye that glistened with seraphic rapture, as it caught on this side the river of death, a distant prospect of the ethereal scenes of eternal bliss—the disciple of Christ, like his Master, wept in the hour of triumph, over the place whose inhabitants might have known, ere they were hidden from their eyes, the things belonging to their peace.

Soon after this animated declaration of his own hopes, and his fears for many of his flock, Mr. Walker was seized with a violent illness. A fever confined him for several weeks to his room ; and when he had in some measure lost the disease, its effects on an enfeebled system gave mournful warning of his approach to the grave.

His friends, however, had the satisfaction of seeing him recruit his strength a little ; as is evident from the following letter of the Earl of Dartmouth to Mr.

Rawlings, who sent this pious nobleman accounts of his health.

Blackheath, May 17, 1760.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am more obliged to you than I can well express, for the repeated notices you have given me concerning that holy man of God, our valuable friend ; and am heartily thankful to the indulgent Father of mercies, for the prospect your last brings of the continuance of his useful labours. While the will of God concerning him seemed doubtful, I could not resolve to write to you, not knowing how to suit my letter to the state it might find him in, but contented myself to wait with anxious impatience for the farther account you promised me, and which came not, through the hands of Mr. Talbot, till last night. In the meantime I had various thoughts of heart ; sometimes concluding that the Lord had taken him, and then supposing that a remaining doubt as to the event of his illness had induced you to defer writing. My prayers were sometimes faintly offered up for him : had they not been addressed to Him who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, whose all-piercing eyes discern the very thoughts and intents of the heart, they must have been lost in the multitude of strong cries and earnest supplications, that have been offered up at Truro and elsewhere. These I trust have prevailed to the prolonging a life, which is to be made yet farther instrumental in promoting the Redeemer's

glory, and the salvation of redeemed souls. The fever with which Mr. W. has been attacked, seems by many of its symptoms, to have been of the same nature with that which many, in and about London, have undergone this spring; but with this material difference,—that, in these parts, it has usually been attended with an eruption, which the physicians have endeavoured to promote as much as possible. This I suppose, occasions the difference in the manner of their treatment; here they have spared [depletion] as much as possible, and supported their patients with cordials. In both cases the success is from the Lord; to him be all the glory. Many thanks to you for your animating exhortations. I thank God that I cannot look inward, but I see abundant cause of self-abasement; or upward, but I see mercies, that in a less insensible heart, would excite the warmest returns of gratitude and love. A strong remainder of unmortified sin casts a cloud before my eyes, that I cannot yet look forward with that joyful expectation which animates the breast of my friend. May my Lord speedily remove it, and give me to rejoice in hope of his glory, with joy unspeakable! I know you will not think it a trouble to let me hear once more of Mr. Walker. The sermon and tract you promise will be very acceptable,—as all the former have been. I am much obliged to you for the perusal of Mr. Burnet's letter:—if the anecdote which he mentions concerning the lay-preachers be true, I am heartily sorry for it. I have heard that it was true some years ago, but has not been permitted of late. He and his fellow labourer,

Mr. Venn, are, I believe, as useful ministers as any that adorn our church; may they long be made a blessing to their parish and kingdom! I beg you to pray for one who much needs your prayers, as the most unfaithful of the servants of our common Lord, and who is your

Affectionate friend,

D.

Another letter from Lord Dartmouth to the same gentleman, will shew the lively interest he felt in the cheering, but delusive prospect of Mr. Walker's recovery; and though only a part of it refers directly to the subject of our present narrative, the remainder is a valuable testimony to the zeal of other excellent and well known clergymen.

Blackheath, June, 26, 1760.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I sent forward your letter to Mr. Talbot without delay, and the sermon as soon as I had read it, which I did with much satisfaction, and most heartily join in praising the Lord for giving the powerful word, and adding to the company of the preachers of the everlasting gospel in this favoured land. A mercy of the like nature is that which he has lately shewn to your part of the kingdom more especially, and to the whole in a degree, in restoring Mr. Walker to life and usefulness. May his latter end [be] greatly [blessed] and many souls yet be added to his crown

of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus! How greatly am I obliged to you for the particular account you have sent me, of the temper of this happy man in his late trying circumstances! my earnest wish for myself, for you, for all that I love, is, that whenever we are brought to the borders of the grave, we may be possessed of the same calm and stedfast confidence in the loving promises of our redeeming God and Father, and taste of that peace which passeth all understanding, which Christ did bequeath as his dying legacy to his beloved disciples, and in them to all that believe on, and love him to the end of the world. If we would thus die the death of the righteous, we must of all necessity die daily to the world, to sin and self; the Lord help us so to do.

I have delightful accounts from Huddersfield of the wonderful manner in which the ministry of their faithful and laborious vicar¹ is blessed to that people, and by my last letters from thence, have the satisfaction to learn that his health was never better than at present. Thus does the Lord prosper and support his servants that trust in him, under all discouragements: blessed are they, who with faithful Abraham, against hope can believe in hope, and expect the accomplishment of the promises of God, when to the eye of flesh and blood, there appears the least probability of it. Mr. Venn laments exceedingly the loss of Mr. Burnet, whose infirm state has I find at last obliged him to seek the benefit of change of air. In

¹ Mr. Venn.

his last [letter] to me are these words concerning him ; “ My faithful helper in the Lord’s work, after many repeated efforts to continue in the exercise of his duty, is obliged to desist : his behaviour under these afflicting circumstances, glorifies his Saviour and recommends his faith. Invincible patience, and the deepest humiliation, justifying God and accepting the strokes of his rod as a punishment for iniquity, joined to stedfast confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, are the abiding tempers of his heart. It is my prayer that he may be restored to help me ; for I may really say of Mr. Burnet as Paul of Timothy, I know few like-minded, who preach the hatred and the mortification of sin, whilst they exalt the free grace and righteousness of our God and Saviour ; who teach men to live in the denial of every evil temper, and in the exercise of every heavenly grace, and at the same time, sensible of their vileness, to cry, “ God be merciful to me a sinner.”

As I have formerly mentioned to you the labours of my dear friend and tutor Mr. Merrick, at Reading, among the soldiers occasionally quartered in that place, I inclose for your perusal, the copy of a letter he received from one of them, sometime after he had left the place. I have not time at present to copy it, therefore must beg you to return it. My best respects attend Miss A. and Miss T.

I am my dear friend,
Yours in the bonds of Christian love,

D.

In the month of August, Mr. Walker was recommended by his physician to try the Bristol Hotwells. It was hoped that they would relieve a violent cough which had succeeded his feverish disorder, and incapacitated him for exertion. Yet while he remained in the midst of his people, he knew not how to refrain, so that he became convinced of the necessity of withdrawing from them, as his illness was increased by distress at his inability to watch over and feed the little flock which the Lord had given him. Though enfeebled by disease, and worn down by anxiety, his sympathy for others was not absorbed in selfish attention to his own sufferings and necessities. He received, just before he quitted Truro, the account of the death of Mrs. Adam; and though he wrote with great difficulty, he could not help addressing a long letter to the bereaved survivor. He who can read it unmoved, must be a stranger to that Christian tenderness of spirit, which alone enables us to comprehend the beautiful expression of St. Paul, "as sorrowful yet always rejoicing."

To the Rev. Thomas Adam.

Aug. 20th, 1760.

DEAR SIR,

When I saw your letter an hour ago sealed with black, I was satisfied of what I should find in it. I cannot but feel with you for the loss of a wife, and therein a friend, who had been the long-accustomed

partaker of your joys and sorrows, and whose absence is therefore the more to be regretted because of your advancing years. I doubt not but our covenant God will every way make this up to you. All his dispensations are mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant and testimonies. I could not, however, forbear immediately taking up my pen, to explain somewhat of my sensibility on this occasion, and if the Lord will, to minister some consolation. It is the universal way of tender, gracious hearts at such seasons, to suspect the want of submission, because of the bitterness of grief which their souls experience ; and while there is indeed nothing they wish to say from the bottom of their souls, so much as “ the will of the Lord be done,” yet to raise objections against themselves from their sorrow, where they have good ground of confidence through that resignation of spirit which the Lord has given them surely, through faith in Jesus Christ, if the resignation be real. But there lies the doubt—is the resignation real, when the grief is of such sort, venting itself in sobs and tears at the first, and then afterwards holding such possession of the thoughts as to make the loss perpetually uppermost, and impressing a thousand things relative to the departed continually on the mind ? You know resignation implies loss, and evidently a feeling of it too, without which under such losses, I see not how there could be any exercise of that Christian grace. Go into your inner man ; Can you there in your coolest judgment justify God in what he has done, abhorring the thought of asking him,

“ What doest thou ? ” Can you there find also that you are acknowledging there is wisdom, mercy, love, as well as justice in the stroke, and that both because you assuredly know who has done it, and because you see this goodness of God therein in many instances ? And as the upshot of both, are you determined never so to hearken to the pleadings of flesh and blood, as to admit any suspicion to be harboured in you of either God’s justice or mercy in this affliction, but on the contrary to give God the glory of being a righteous and gracious Father in this as in every thing else ?—withal, so far from being disgusted with the work he has for you to do, that you are better pleased with and more resolved upon it ? Is not this resignation ? And as you find this to be your happy case, disquiet not yourself about the measure or continuance of your grief. In respect of that, be content to be a man ; and if you imagine your grief excessive, impute that imagined excess to the peculiarity of your circumstances and constitution. In truth, my dear Sir, had I heard you had been capable of losing such a wife without feeling, it would not have raised my opinion of you.

Regarding myself, you will have received, long before this reaches you, some account of God’s dealings with my soul during my sickness. To that I have nothing now very material to add, except it be that the thinking of, and making provision for a Bristol journey too much engages my mind, and that I have not gone through it as I could wish. You will understand that my physician had advised me to

the Bristol waters, that I set out next Monday for that place in a post chaise, and that I purpose tarrying there two months. Friend Talbot, you see by the enclosed, has a scheme of carrying me with him to Warwickshire, to which I shall have no aversion, for a week, if my health will admit. I was telling him last year, that if ever I came to Kington, I should wish you to meet me there. He was rejoiced at the thought of it, and I will answer for your being most cordially welcome. I had some thoughts of going to Kington about this time had I not been sick; yet I mentioned not to you the meeting me there, knowing poor Mrs. Adam's condition. Now, I am ready to think a journey thither might be of service to your health, as I doubt not it would to our souls. Do think of this. You may be of great use to Mr. Talbot. I shall be waiting for your resolution on this head with some impatience, as it may have a considerable influence to determine me in going so far or not.

I had quite forgot the great sting and poison of your wound, how you have been wanting to her. That you have been so, is without question, and I rejoice to see you humbled under the sense of it. But let not that raise any soul-wounding accusations, seeing in every thing else as well as this, you need the blood of sprinkling. Let us not be surprized that in every thing we come short; but rather thankful that we are not left to ourselves, and be mindful that the edifying of others depends not on us but the Spirit.

I am heartily glad Mr. Venn has put his book into your hands; as from his printed sermons, I have some

fear he will hardly state things in that evangelical way I could wish. You will be faithful in your animadversions, as the public is concerned ; and I am persuaded he will take all kindly. I heartily wish you may find all things to your liking ; and if it be so in general, it matters less for lesser matters.

Mr. B. has mistaken us, or you him. All we have thought is, that his being at Huddersfield is too much for him, and that he should remove. To what place, whether Cornwall or elsewhere, we judge should be left to Providence.

I have now wrote a long letter indeed, considering with what difficulty I write. But, indeed, compassion constrained me, and I could not forbear. Let us be of good cheer, my friend, we shall be soon home. May our hearts be increasingly above, and our lives testify that we are taken out of the world, and have our conversation in heaven.

Yours in all love,

[S. WALKER.]

Direct to me at Mr. Henry King's, saddler, on St. Austin's Back, Bristol.

What a spirit does this letter breathe ! It is the effusion of a heart, in which grace had smoothed away all the roughness of human selfishness, that it might, as a polished mirror, reflect the Saviour's image divinely wrought within by the power of the Holy Ghost. At this period also, Mr. Burnet's health seemed to be giving way, as has been before noticed

in a letter of Lord Dartmouth. Many, indeed, must have been the fervent effectual prayers of these suffering disciples, for the church and for each other; prayers elicited by wholesome chastisement; prayers registered in heaven, and of which we probably at this very hour enjoy the benefit.

The Hotwells, after a trial of some weeks, were found to have made no favourable impression on Mr. Walker's disorder; but the blessed state of mind which he enjoyed, is fully evidenced in the following letter to the Truro Society.

Bristol, September 18, 1760.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

While the unsearchable will of our common most gracious Father, who has united us in spirit by so near a relation, is taking me from you for a season in presence, it becomes both you and me to submit: and although, during this separation, both you are deprived of very valuable opportunities, and I disabled from that service, and deprived of that people which are so justly near my heart, yet we ought not to indulge an untimely, unsubmitting wish of seeing each other again. What a blessing, comfort, and refreshment the thought of you has been to my soul (as always, so more especially in these never-to-be-forgotten hours, when the eternal world appeared but a step off, and my soul was fixed on the illustrious day of the Lord's appearance) God only knows. While, therefore, you are so near my heart, my comfort

and happiness having so much dependance upon you, it is impossible that I should either forget you, or forbear to pray and praise God for you, [and to] contribute what I may in my present circumstances to your establishment, progress, and joy.

How much my views must have been drawn to the world whither the forerunner is for us entered, in the sickness I have been so long under, and am, as far I can see, very slowly recovering from, ye may easily judge. Views of the riches of Christ, and prospects of the glory that shall be revealed, have been and still are, blessed be God, my best cordials. Yet I have found much opposition from the quarter of unbelief, and that to be strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, when every thing of my own is, and is evidently seen to be against me, when grace is so imperfect, when this life appears to be closing up, and all the false confidence derived from the esteem, and supports of most pious and endeared friends is stripped away, is an attainment indeed which I long after myself, and earnestly wish may be vouchsafed to you also in life, as well as in death. In these circumstances I find no relief, but in the blessed word of God; nor in that either, unless the gracious, delightful truths contained therein be made out to my mind by the Holy Ghost: for without his illumination, my most attentive reasonings on the Scriptures, have always been found unsatisfactory and unedifying. Let me exhort you therefore to a more diligent use of the Scriptures, in much prayer for the light of the Spirit, that the glory of the Lord may shine more

abundantly into your hearts, and produce in you a more lively desire of seeing him as he is, with an increasing transformation of your whole man into his likeness. Ah ! my dear friends we neither love nor use the Scriptures as we ought ! Do we make them our only guide, having no dependance on the wisdom of man ? Do we come to them only for instruction, and do we come to them in every case ? Do we come to them without prejudice, desiring only to know what the will of the Lord is, and praying always for a will to perform it, however self may be denied by our so doing ? Do we come to them daily, if possible, in all our retirements, making them the ground of our confidence that our prayers are heard, and the measure whereby we are guided in all the things we ask of God ? Particularly, do we read them afterwards, for support and direction according to present exigencies ? Do we make them, and not our own fancies, the foundation of our meditations, and the rule of our conduct, so as that on no pretence whatever (especially on that most dangerous delusion of being under the guidance of the Spirit without regard had to the word) we either undertake any thing as duty without their warrant, or hold ourselves excused in the neglect of what they enjoin upon us ? I will ask one further question of *you*—do you with awe, reverence, attention, and all carefulness, hear them read in the church, regarding that part of the public service as among the most material and important branches of it ?

That I say so much to you concerning the Scrip-

tures, is owing to the urgent necessity there is of doing it, from the state of religion every where. While professors have not the word of God before their eyes, they must follow the authority of man, or their own inventions, and unavoidably bring disgrace upon the name they profess.

I have your prayers—I value them highly—I request them earnestly. If the will of the Lord be so, I desire to be speedily with you. What his will is in this respect, is pretty much concealed as yet; for although I grow better, I have no strength to do any thing. That the Lord may instruct you more in his revealed mind, may make you perfect, strengthen, settle you, is the important desire and prayer of

My dear friends,

Your most sincerely affectionate

Servant in Christ Jesus,

SAMUEL WALKER.

It is impossible to read this delightful letter, without remarking the increasing humility of its writer as he approached his end, and how much more he mixed up himself with his people, when speaking of Christian imperfections, than he did in the earlier and less experienced days of his religious course. The fact is, the nearer we rise to heaven in true piety, the more we see of our hearts with the keen perception of exalted angels; and the view of our own failings becomes so clear and forcible, that we are unable to refrain from casting ourselves in the same dust and ashes into which we would bring others. The altered

tone of Mr. Walker, when compared with the denunciations of his first days of zeal, is an exemplary instance of the truly humbling effect of a high state of religious attainment. The larger our supply of grace, the less will be our opinion of any thing that is in us by nature.

Mr. Walker passed about two months at Bristol; but deriving no satisfactory relief from the waters, he removed to Kineton,¹ in Warwickshire, with the view of spending sometime with his attached friend, Mr. Talbot. The season, however, set in so unfavourably, that it was thought expedient for him to return to Bristol. During his second visit to the Hotwells, it appears that the state of repose necessary for his health, became insufferable to his active mind, and he accordingly wrote the following letter for his papers.

To Mr. Jonah Milford.

DEAR JONAH,

While I was with you, the trouble of many little things which I had to do, lay on yourself and honest Andrew. You must still therefore bear the burden. I am not willing to be altogether idle while I am absent from you, and shall be glad to take this opportunity of finishing *the corruptions of the heart*, *the illustrations of the familiar catechism*, and the *directions relating to marriage*. What I desire of you

¹ Also called Kington, probably because King John erected a castle, and held his court there.

is, to find in the leather desk in the study (for there I know it is) a scrap of paper whereon is written in a few lines, the general plan under which I intend to methodize the corruptions of the heart. The corruptions themselves I have here already.

You must absolutely find also my book of the illustrations. The copy I have is taken from one of the boys, and utterly unintelligible in many places. Desire Mr. Conon to enquire for it at the society. Perhaps Rawlings may have it, or Miss Tregenna. Pray transcribe the whole (of the illustrations only) and send me. Somewhere or other in the study, you will meet with the hints concerning marriage. They are written on a sheet of paper; but I must have besides what was in your little book, and in a paper which dear Henry Trewolla transcribed. Send me these as you get them ready.

I find the thought of my dear people at Truro a trying one. I could wish to see you all. But God gives me herein a measure of submission. I can say in some sort, his will be done. Remember me to them whosoever they are, and believe me, dear Jonah, with wonted affection,

Yours,

S. WALKER.

I saw —— at Devizes. He prays; but is dreadfully under worldly fear and shame.

The next letter, the last he ever wrote to his friend Mr. Rawlings, gives some hope of returning health,

and shews how sanctified affliction had wrought upon his soul.

Bristol, November 11, 1760.

MY DEAR RAWLINGS,

When your letter came in, I was taking up my pen to write to Counsellor Schutz, a promising man, and whom I suppose you know, for I find you have been trafficking with greater folks than he. Immediately I laid aside that purpose, my heart being strongly inclined to a little conversation with my dear friend at St. Columbe.

You will be looking, I know, to find the state of my health in the first place: I bless God [it is] better. The complaint on my lungs is in a manner, I may say entirely, gone; neither have I any cough that gives me trouble. I sleep well enough, the colour of my face is better, and within about ten days I have eaten with some appetite.

* * * * *

After this account of myself, you will be ready to ask, what then ails you? Why truly nothing particularly. But I am relaxed as usual, gain no strength nor flesh, and I am continually getting cold, though I think no care is wanting to prevent it. In short, all is much better than I could expect, and in my judgment it will, if I can rub through the winter at this rate. Where God only knows; but I know assuredly where I wish it might be, and where I [desire to] spend the residue of my days, as far as the honour and interests of my Master shall permit. How shall I

easily persuade myself that my poor services can be of such use [any where] as at dear Truro? Pray signify so much to the dear people there, and withal that I have no thought of leaving them, nor ever had, unless driven to it by being unable to labour any longer among them. I could say something to you also concerning the growing health of my soul, as I trust. Indeed I can say, with great truth, mercy embraceth me on every side. I have found of late a more happy concurrence of self abasing, and Christ glorifying views than ever before in my life. Never before could I say such bad things of myself, or good ones of him. I have been led to justify the Lord in taking me from my people, and in stopping my mouth; yea even should he never allow me to open it more, and lay me quite aside as a vessel in which he has no pleasure. Views of this kind have, I believe, wrought more resignation in my spirit to God's way with me; but I desire to remember, that if he hideth his face I shall be troubled. Yet why should I think he will? He could never see any thing in me worthy of his least regard: yet he has never forsaken me from the day that he first caused me to know him, and in the perilous time. Oh, blessed be God! How did he stand by and save me! All is free grace; even glory is the gift of God through Christ, and if we do not look on it as such, we shall never long after it; and pray remark that, and examine your heart closely upon it, the rather because the hope of glory in you can be your only security against the world.

But I am learning to contract my letters, I write so many of necessity.

The poor creature you mention is an object of compassion indeed. Do not leave him by any means, and pray with him *shortly*. Do not despair of him, and let this be your reason for not doing it, even because he seems to despair of himself. Good Mr. Penrose spends half a page to shew that Francis Spira's case was not absolute despair, but imagined he saw some faith in him through his deepest agonies. Your method I conceive, should be, not to press him to the application of particular promises, so much as to lay out the scheme of redemption from the very fall, insisting on the person and transactions of Christ, and then observing the fulness and freedom of the promises issuing from it. By such a channel it is, that you probably will be able to lead him to see the evil of sin. I would talk this over and over to him, and never without this, speak of the justice, majesty, and holiness of God, explaining these as they are illustrated in the life of Christ. It may be very proper by and by also, to open the corruption of nature. The Lord be with you in this work.

I have seen no reason to alter, whether doctrine or discipline, by any thing I see abroad, and therefore advise you to go on as we have done.

Excuse my saying more, than that I am in the sincerest love to all with you, especially those of your house,

Your cordially affectionate and obliged,

SAMUEL WALKER.

To Mr. Rawlings, Junr.

At St. Columbe.

A second letter to Mr. Jonah Milford acknowledging the receipt of some of his papers, and asking for more, is very expressive of affection for his people, and desire to be at work in some way.

Bristol, Nov. 15, 1760.

MY DEAR JONAH,

You and Andrew have sent me the papers I needed, which I regard as a testimony of your love, and take very kindly. But yet there is another paper regarding the corruptions of the heart, which I must get you to look again for. You will find in the desk a half sheet of paper, on which is written, very fair for my hand, a line or two at the top to this purpose, *A familiar introduction to self-knowledge, Preface.* This is not the paper I want, but a scrap like that you have already sent me, whereon is methodized the scheme in which I last determined to publish the corruptions of the heart. The hints you have sent me were written before and designed for a larger scheme. Unless you look carefully you will overlook it. As there are many papers of business, these pretty well known to you and Andrew, I would desire that none but you two may be employed in this search.

The letters sent me by one and another of you are a cordial to me. Any one who expects no particular answer (unless there be urgent need of advice) will do me a pleasure by putting a line into Mr. Conon's cover.

* * * * *

Every one says I look better, and in divers respects I think myself to be better. But I gain no strength that I can perceive, so still remain unfit for any labour.

It will give me unspeakable comfort to return to my dear charge at Truro, if God will ; and as I do not grow worse, but rather better, there is reason to suppose it is his will I shall so do, but not quickly. Was I now at Truro, I must keep within doors unless carried abroad.

I am, dear Jonah,

Your truly affectionate,

S. WALKER.

And so say to the rest.

These letters of Mr. Walker convey to us the assurance that he was no ordinary example of a Christian in sickness. His unreserved communication with his people ; his love for them ; his anxiety to write for the good of souls, when he could no longer speak to them ; his longing to return to Truro, mingled with the truest resignation to the divine will, were lovely symptoms of a supply of spiritual health, as the bodily frame decayed. On his own account he could not wish to live ; nor had he any longing to remain here except he might be made the instrument of adding new glories to the diadem of his Redeemer, by a laborious and faithful ministry. The all-wise providence of God had however ordained, that the inhabitants of Truro should see their pastor no more ; but it is said that in his conversations with persons

who visited him at Bristol, he was made eminently useful, and probably there was some important design in the appointment of his sojourn there in illness, which will be unfolded, when the mysteries of the Lord's dealings with his children are developed to admiring and adoring saints, in the bright realms of heaven.

About a month after the date of the last letter to Jonah Milford, Mr. Walker was advised to remove to the neighbourhood of London, and accepted the invitation of the Earl of Dartmouth to pay him a visit at Blackheath. Lord Dartmouth was one of those excellent men, who, in a period of wide-spread error, and apathy towards real religion, enjoyed the privilege of a knowledge of divine truth, and manifested a sincere love for preachers of the gospel. He was the friend of several zealous clergymen, and was glad to welcome to his house a despised follower of his despised Master. His generosity to Mr. Walker has been already mentioned, and the following letter will shew the sympathy he felt for him in his trying illness. It also describes the state of his health after he had removed to the house of his noble host.

Blackheath, Dec. 30th, 1760.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The secret of our correspondence has been discovered, I find, to the sagacity of my valuable guest, which is not of the common sort, by some-

thing that dropped from me at Kington : you see I am but ill to be trusted with things of this nature. You are looking, I know, with impatience for some account of his health. He appears to be better than he was a week ago. You may possibly have learned that he caught cold upon the road, which brought on a return of his cough and of the oppression upon his lungs, and made so much alteration as gave some of his friends, who had seen him not long before, much uneasiness ; but within a few days, the case appears to be much altered with him ; he now coughs not at all, breathes with more freedom, and the lameness which the cold had settled in his limbs, has almost entirely left him ; his appetite is not very good, but by means of asses' milk, broth, and other things between meals, he receives a sufficient quantity of nourishment in the day. The opinion of an eminent physician in London, whom he has consulted, is that there is no unsoundness at present within him, and consequently no immediate danger ; that his disorder proceeds from malignant matter which, in his late fever, he had not strength enough to throw out upon the skin ; that if this should form upon his lungs, there will then be great danger. I had wrote to you some days ago, but deferred to send my letter at Mr. Walker's request, who proposed to give me a note for you to inclose in it. I am now glad I did not send it, because I had not given so favourable an account as I do now : if he finds time to write to you as he proposed, your impatience to feast upon that letter may possibly cause you to wish this at an end ;

observe I do not say it will ; if it should, it would neither surprise nor offend,

My dear friend,

Your faithful and obedient Servant,

D.

[P. S.]—It is my hearty prayer that the Lord may give a blessing to your endeavours for the consolation of the unhappy man you mention.

Notwithstanding the hopes expressed in this letter, the situation of Mr. Walker, during his confinement in the house of Lord Dartmouth, became one of singular interest and severe suffering. He was tried by all the mournful changes of that most miserable of diseases, a pulmonary consumption, the diversified effects of which are equally distressing on body and mind. In the midst of these afflictions, the kindness of his generous host and hostess was unbounded ; the physicians refused to receive any thing from him for their attendance ; his flock at Truro were perpetually conveying to him sums of money, cheerfully bestowed on a minister who had impoverished himself for their sakes. Thus he received the full extent of a Saviour's promise, to those who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, whereby strength was added to that faith with which he contemplated the yet unrevealed glories of a heavenly world.

All who visited him in sickness, were struck with the calm dignity and peaceful resignation of his manner, and many were greatly edified by his conversation : for he retained full possession of his mental

vigour, and was as capable as ever of guiding the inquirer, consoling the desponding, and rebuking ignorant pretenders. An instance of the latter power is recorded in an anecdote relating to a visit he received from a presumptuous youth, during his residence at Blackheath. A young man called to request the favour of an interview with him, which was granted. Mr. Walker supposed he wanted spiritual advice, but found to his surprise, that he came, with an air of consequence, to set him right, as he thought, upon points of doctrine peculiar to his own sect, a service he was disposed to offer from the report he had heard of his usefulness in the church! He was received with great courtesy by Mr. Walker, who politely thanked him for the kindness of his intentions, but requested that he would first reply to a few questions.

“ Pray Sir,” inquired Mr. Walker, “ what is your age ? ”

“ About three and twenty, Sir.”

“ Well, Sir, and how old do you suppose I am ? ”

“ I should imagine, Sir, past fifty.”

“ May I ask the nature of your occupation, Sir ? ”

“ A journeyman cabinet-maker.”

“ I suppose you know mine ? ”

“ Yes, Sir : you are a minister.”

“ How long should you think I have been one ? ”

“ Why, Sir, I have heard you have been a very zealous clergyman for some years.”

“ Which of us should you imagine possessed the most learning ? ”

“ You of course, Sir.”

“ But which of us, do you think, has studied the Scriptures most attentively ?”

“ Sir, you have had the most opportunities of doing so.”

“ Now, Sir, which should you conceive has prayed the most ?”

“ Very probably you may, Sir.”

“ Which do you suppose has enjoyed the most advantages for improvement and experience ?”

“ Of course, Mr. Walker, you, Sir, in your situation.”

“ Well young man, I have only one more thing to say to you. What do you think of the self-conceit, that could induce you to come here to instruct a person who, according to your admission, had been eminently useful in the church, and was certainly your superior in age, length of religious experience, learning, and study of Scripture ? Now allow me to return you the kindness you designed for me, by instructing you in the pride and vanity of your own heart.” This rebuke delivered with all the mildness of Christian love, with the peculiar force of the venerable minister’s manner, and with the solemnity of one that spoke on the verge of the eternal world, produced a great effect upon the mind of this self-conceited youth, and may prove a useful lesson to those of the present day, who mistake their own prejudices for clear views of gospel doctrine, and fancy that skill in the verbiage of party, implies a real knowledge of scriptural truth.

The state of Mr. Walker's feelings, as well as the way in which he was employed during the winter at Blackheath, will find their most acceptable illustration in his own words, contained in a letter to Mr. Adam.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

Feb. 9th, 1761.

DEAR SIR,

To examine myself by the sentiments which you set before me in yours of Jan. 23, has been the principal business of this Sunday morning; and I thank God for raising you up to me, and for putting it into your heart to advise me so seasonably. Thank you for it. I can go no other where with the least gleam of comfort; all is against me; all dark, uncertain, dreadful. But here I find myself complete. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world opens God's loving heart to me, and ministers, as you say, at seasons a glance of future things which warms my spirit. This is not ordinary; but while I can keep steady in that view only of a Redeemer's righteousness, I find a calm, settled peace which nothing can discompose. Through the mercy of God, I have enjoyed much of this since the very beginning of my sickness, and such effects from it, as I know to be beyond all power of my own. But do not imagine, I know you cannot, that I have been without my temptations, or nothing to lament. The devil continually essays to

take occasion of the unsteadiness of my head to raise doubts, and I still see the natural love of life so strong, (I doubt not also that it is supported by a sinful love of this world) that the thought of recovery seems to be too pleasing, and not to be resolved into a pleasing acquiescence with the divine will, if such should not be the case. But do not think that these things distress me; they rather endear Christ, and cause me in spirit to rejoice that a day is coming when they will be all done away.

As far as the pale ink goes was written on Sunday sen-night, when I could go no farther. I have since, through mercy, recovered more ground, and am able to write more at a time without that exceeding pain, which the posture I am obliged to use in writing was used immediately to occasion. And, indeed, blessed be the name of the Lord, since the 20th last, when I began the use of James' powders, my disorder, which before was hastening apace to a conclusion of my life, has received some check, and in several respects I am unquestionably better, mending, I think every day, though slowly. I am not without my fears, should I recover, but I hope they are not mistrustful; I am sure they cannot be needless while I have so base a heart.

I bless the Lord beyond all things for the refreshing news I get from Truro by Mr. Conon, that my dear Society people walk in the truth. It is also an additional mercy, that though the Lord has stopt my mouth in public, yet since my coming out, he has been pleased to make some private use of me. I have

conversed at Bristol or here with both the Wesleys, Whitfield, Madan, Berridge. In regard of these, there has not been much gained on either part, except only in the case of Mr. Madan. The rest have spread, whether such a spirit of licentiousness as to all order, or through the leaven of Moravianism, such a spirit of enthusiasm, as I fear will not be soon extinguished. But I have met with two or three other clergymen, and a most comfortable group of young gentlemen at Oxford, that will soon be clergymen, with whom I have had sweet counsel. For the sake of several of these, especially of some of them that have been tutored by the Hutchinsonians, I have by little and little as I have been able, drawn out the inclosed, which, if you approve, I shall make the use of you see.

When I published that first discourse you mention, I was intent on finishing the whole without delay, to the end that when all those discourses should be finished, I might then make public the conversations whereof these discourses were designed to be an illustration. This was the reason of my venturing abroad without you. Yet very soon I found, both that the publication of the conversations would not admit of the proposed delay, and that the remarkably ill sale of this first discourse left me without encouragement to proceed, at the least in the way of single discourses. So I put off the execution to a future day, which is also at the greater distance, from the prospect of making public those lectures on the catechism in which I am engaged, and to the prosecution

of which I am diversely urged, should God restore me to strength for the purpose. Shall I live to finish that, I shall think it my duty not to forget the other. My back has been long crying stop. The Lord be with you. When you can, let me hear from you. But send back the paper soon."

It is to be lamented that the paper enclosed to Mr. Adam in this communication, was not preserved with it; but the mention thereof shews that bodily sufferings had not quenched the fervent spirit of Mr. Walker's heavenly zeal. He saw the light beginning to "break forth as the morning" upon the Church he loved; and his greatest solace in pain and weakness, was the hope that he might yet be made an instrument of pointing out the scriptural pattern of its superstructure, and the solidity of its foundation, as the melting of the mists of ignorance and neglect, rendered visible upon the walls of our sanctuary the true signs of "the Tabernacle of the Lord."

CHAPTER XX.

MR. WALKER'S LAST ILLNESS, AND DEATH — HIS
CHARACTER—PERSONAL APPEARANCE—WRITINGS
—REMARKS.

LETTER OF MR. HAWEIS.

IN the summer of the year 1761, Mr. Walker's illness assumed a character which plainly foretold that his end was near at hand. A burning fever by day, and at night distressing perspirations, with a cough that deprived him of rest, spread a languor over his frame and depressed his spirits. But in all his trials he was supported and comforted. There is a touching evidence of this in a letter addressed at his desire to Mr. Adam, by his friend Mr. Haweis. It was the last communication to his long-valued correspondent.

To the Rev. Thos. Adam.

Blackheath, June 30, 1761.

REV. SIR,

Mr. Walker, who seems drawing near the verge of eternity, desires me to present to you his best regards, with thanks for all the light he hath received from you, and the edification you have, through grace, been the means of communicating. He tells me his outward man perisheth, but that his inward man is renewed day by day. Much lower he cannot be till he breathes no more. He professes entire satisfaction in the blood of the covenant; and though without the least measure of sensible delight, enjoys a serenity and peace in believing, which everlasting promises received by faith into the heart minister. This probably will be, dear Sir, to you his last farewell. May you stand fast, and be partaker with those who “through faith and patience inherit the promises.” This is *his* ardent wish, nor less, believe me, dear Sir, that of his amanuensis,

Your Brother in the Gospel,

T. HAWEIS.

To this letter was added as postscript—“You are desired to return the copy of the Treatise on the Sacrament, sent you for correction, as soon as possible.” Immediately after, Mr. Walker wrote in a most painfully tremulous hand—“*I would say much of my hope. Blessed be God, we shall soon be in*

heaven. *Then we shall see all the loving-kindness of the Lord. Adieu ! Adieu !*

S. WALKER."

Here his strength, as is apparent from the signature, was exhausted, and Mr. Haweis thus concluded. "Mr. Walker says further, Mr. Talbot of Kineton, will inspect your readings, and is the ablest of his friends." It is impossible to look upon the feeble tracery of these two or three parting lines of the dying saint, as they still remain in the original letter, without emotion. Yet what a lovely conclusion did it form to a long and instructive correspondence !

Though reduced to the lowest point of bodily weakness, this good man's faith never failed. "The weakness of my body" he observed, "deprives me of all joyous sensations, but my faith in God's promises, I bless the Lord, is firm and unshaken. What though the loss of strength and spirits, robs me of all comfortable communion with God?—the promises are not therefore made void." In his moments of comparative ease, he strictly reviewed the doctrines he had taught in his preaching and writings ; and this was his happy conclusion.—*I am sure they will stand the test of the last day.* How different from the feelings of one who had merely written for profit, or the vain applause of man ! On contemplating his past life, he blessed God for the remembrance of many satisfactory symptoms of the power of genuine grace upon his heart. He rejoiced in them as evidences of his interest in the everlasting covenant, and praised

God, that for ten years before his illness, he could see “evident marks of having lived with a single eye to the divine glory, in opposition to the selfishness of his nature.” In such calmness did he possess his soul, that it was said of him, it never could be discovered he desired to live or wished to die. Whenever the delusive changes of his disease flattered him with a momentary hope of restoration, his thoughts were in an instant with his work at Truro; and when the relapse of his shattered frame caused the shadows of death to spread around him again, his affections rose from earth to heaven, from the fold below, to the Lamb on high in the midst of the throne.

On the second of July, Lord Dartmouth in a letter to his friend the late Sir Richard Hill,¹ made the following reference to Mr. Walker.

“Poor, or rather happy Mr. Walker is so much altered since you saw him, and grows weak so fast, that there is no prospect of his continuing many days. He enjoys the most delightful satisfaction in the approach of that hour which will put an end to the sufferings of his body, and give his soul an entrance into the regions of everlasting bliss. His greatest fear is, that he should long for it with too much impati-

¹ I avail myself of this opportunity to mention that I intend to publish from a large mass of curious materials in my possession, an account of the life of Sir Richard Hill, with a view to a history of the progress of evangelical religion in his days. These documents were partly found among the papers of his brother, the late Rev. Rowland Hill; others have been confided to me by his family and friends.

ence. His extreme weakness makes him incapable of fixing his attention upon things unseen for many minutes, but he has a calm and unshaken reliance on the truth of God's word and promises, and as ever, stedfast confidence in His mercy towards him. I cannot wish for myself, a more solid assurance of hope than he is possessed of, though without those lively sensations which his weak body is now incapable of. I heartily wish you, my dear friend, an enjoyment of the same, after many years of increase in grace and usefulness." The day after the date of the letter from which this affecting extract is taken, the same excellent nobleman wrote to his correspondent in Cornwall.

Blackheath, July 3, 1761.

MY DEAR SIR,

Mr. Walker, to whom I read your letter, says a hearty amen to the prayers you desire him to put up for you, and desires your prayers that he may not dishonour Christ in this last scene of his life; indeed his stedfast faith and exemplary patience are ornaments to his profession. He has an unshaken reliance on the faithfulness and truth of his redeeming God, a firm dependance on his word of promise, without any support from pleasing frames or animating views, which the extreme weakness of his body, and great depression of spirits utterly deprive him of. Surely the loss of them is not to be lamented, when the soul is possessed of such calm and peaceful resignation.

It is my heart's desire that I may die the death of this righteous man ; that my latter end may be like his.

* * * * *

I can say nothing more expressive of Mr. Walker's present condition, than that he grows weaker daily, though he has yet strength to sit up, and that it will be no surprise to hear of his death to-morrow, though it is not improbable that he may continue yet some weeks.

* * * * *

I have lately had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Haweis, who has been here to take a last leave of his dear friend and father in Christ. I trust he is well suited to his situation ; he appears to grow in grace, and while he does so, he shall want no manner of thing, whether spiritual or temporal, that is needful for him.

Dear Mr. W. is just now persuaded to make trial of a medicine of Dr. Ward's. There is little room to expect success ; but if it should please God to make it effectual to bring him back again from the dead, I will not fail to rejoice your heart with the account.

I am dear Sir,

With a grateful sense of your kindness,

Ever yours,

D.

It is mentioned in the valuable memoir prefixed by the late Mr. Stillingfleet to Mr. Walker's Lectures on the Church Catechism, that on the fourth of July

he was able to write a few affecting lines to his beloved confidant and "father," Mr. Conon. He addressed him thus,

To Mr. Conon.

Blackheath, July 4, 1761.

MY DEAREST, MOST FAITHFUL FRIEND,

My disorder, though by no means affording to myself the least prospect of recovery, yet seems to affect me at present more with weakness, than with that violent heat, which rendered me incapable of all thought. I can now, blessed be God! think a little; and with what comfort do I both receive your thoughts, and communicate mine to you! Oh, my dear friend, what do we owe to the Lord for one another! more than I could have conceived, had not God sent me to die elsewhere. We shall have time to praise the Lord, when we meet in the other world. I stand and look upon that blessed world with an established heart: I see the way prepared, opened, and assured to me in Jesus Christ; and for ever blessed be the name of God, that I can look upon death, that introduces that glorious scene, without any kind of fear. I find my grand duty still is submission as to time and circumstances. Why should not I say to you, that I find nothing come so near my heart, as the fear lest my will should thwart God's in any circumstances? Here I think I am enabled to watch and pray in some poor measure. Well, my dear Friend,

I am but stepping a little before you. You will soon also get your release, and then we shall triumph for ever in the name, love, and power of the Lamb. Adieu! Yours in the Lord Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

S. W.

Thus did this saint indeed contemplate the approach of death; and thus did the graces of faith, hope, resignation, and love, beam forth through the gloom of his dying bed. He went down slowly and in suffering to the grave, but those who witnessed his blissful state of mind, described it as perfect peace. Mr. Burnet who came to him on the eleventh of July, wrote to a friend,—“On Saturday, the 11th, I reached Mr. Walker’s lodging at Blackheath. There I saw the dear, dear man lying upon his bed of sickness, pining away in the last stage of a consumption, burnt up with raging fever, and wasted almost to a skeleton. He was perfectly sensible, and so was able to express himself much to our satisfaction. The first thing, which struck me exceedingly, was his patient submission under God’s hand, and his thankful, tender concern for all those who were near to him. So little was his mind engaged with things which pertained to himself merely, that in the smallest things concerning my own convenience and comfort, he behaved as if I had been the sick person. He said he had been uneasy in the beginning of his sickness at the want of sensible frames, but was relieved by that scripture—‘they that worship God

must worship him in Spirit'—with the nobler powers of the soul; and that now he found experimentally the worship of God's Spirit on his heart, in a degree with which he was never before acquainted. 'I am now enabled,' said he at another time, 'to see when it was that the Lord Jesus first laid effectual hold on my heart, which I never was able to discover before, and bore down all opposition. I have a perfect satisfaction in the principles I have preached, and the methods I have taken in general. I have now no doubt respecting my state in Christ, or respecting my future glory. Behold, I am going down to the gates of the grave, and holy angels wait for me. Why do you trouble yourselves and weep? Cannot you rejoice with me? I am going to heaven. Christ died; my Lord! O had I strength to express myself, I could tell you enough to make your hearts leap for joy. God is all love to me, and my trials are very slight.' This account by Mr. Burnet, is in unison with a letter Mr. Walker caused to be written to Mr. Conon only five days before his death, in which he assures him that 'with great confusion of thought, he had no doubts, great confidence, great submission, no complaining.' To this he added, 'as to actual views of the joys that are coming, I have none, but a steadfast belief of them in Christ;' but lest he should be supposed to be wanting in satisfactory experience, he proceeded, 'what I have found in myself for months past, and the present workings of the Spirit, have left me without any doubt of my union with Christ.'

This last observation will explain the reason of a remark made by the Rev. J. Jane in a letter to Mr. Rawlings, written the evening of the very same day Mr. Walker dictated his communication to Mr. Conon.

*Blackheath, Tuesday night,
July 14, 1761.*

DEAR SIR,

I can truly say it has not been my fault, that I have not written a line to Mr. Walker's dearest relations and chief friends, by every post. I have usually prevented his request by the proposal, and he tenderly considering my weakness, has often dissuaded me from attempting it, [and] always cautioned me to write but a line. It was my desire to have written to you this morning, but my lord¹ not returning till just now, I had not received your letter, and want of franks, besides indisposition and other hindrances, put me by. Writing is quite another task to me, at the best, than it is to you.

As soon as I had read your favour, I told Mr. Walker, "I have a letter from R. in answer to that I wrote by your order for the sermons on the law. B—— has them, and he has written to him to send them to Lord D. He begs your prayers." "I cannot pray for him, I am not able to pray for myself." "You may sigh for him." "God bless him, and

¹ Lord Dartmouth.

keep him unspotted from the world. That I can say for him with all my heart, and perhaps that short prayer is better than a multitude of words."

To this fervent ejaculation it is owing that I take pen in hand the instant, late as it is, while the incident is fresh in my memory. I know too, now my lord is come, my writing is superfluous. Any thing in my power, though it be as inconsiderable as the widow's mite, shall not be wanting, be it only to show my zeal.

I doubt not that we agree in every point of Christian doctrine. The matter of "animal sensations" has, in truth, nothing to do with the gospel of Christ. The grief is that they are taken for spiritual, by many imaginary converts, and not a few weak brethren, through the crude notions of injudicious teachers, magnified by their own folly and conceit. This is a kind of tare, which, I am of opinion, by the artifice of the devil, will ever accompany the semination and growth of true religion. I have had frequent occasion to reprove and admonish young people concerning it, and even the more advanced in years and grace, are not always free from some little misapprehension of the nature of spiritual joy, of no consequence indeed, while kept within their breast; but hurtful, when divulged and recommended under the said character of Christian experience. Spiritual discernment ever increases, in proportion to real experience and proficiency in spiritual life; but alas! for want of being well guarded and well instructed, clearly principled and thoroughly disciplined, much

of what passes for experience, with many, is very erroneous and delusive.

I will here set the name of,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate humble servant,

J. JANE.

Fit it is indeed that all Christians, especially ministers of the gospel, be united in heart and affection. Amen.

To this was added, "Thursday noon. 'Two days nearer heaven' is the great comfort of the departing spirit and his surviving friend."

The last struggles of expiring nature in this eminent servant of Christ, are represented to have been very severe, and were perhaps designed to display to those who witnessed them, the victory of faith over the sting and terrors of death. In the midst of convulsions, spasms, and such a dreadful sensation in his heart, that it seemed, to use his own words, "to be tied round with thongs," he maintained always a praying, patient, and sometimes an exulting spirit. On the same day that Mr. Jane's postscript was written, he expressed a sense of the most rapturous foretaste of future bliss. Awaking from a doze, he seized the hand of his nurse, and said, "I have been upon the wings of the cherubim, heaven has been in a manner opened to me; I shall be soon there myself, and am only sorry I cannot take you with me." He also observed to Mr. Burnet, that if his strength allowed,

he could tell him news which would rejoice his heart—"I have had," he said "*such* views of heaven; but I can say no more." These raptures were however qualified by the deepest humility; for when one present rejoiced over his apparent ripeness for heaven, he said, "nay, my dear friend, the body of sin is not yet done away, I shall continue a sinner to the very last gasp." He begged another person to pray for him as a poor miserable sinner. These were more satisfactory evidences of his right condition, than ecstasies in a doze, which are not uncommon in pulmonary diseases just before death. Repentance, faith, love, and obedience, graces which so delightfully adorned the character of Mr. Walker, were the *true* proofs of preparation for heaven, and his confidence in them could not have been shaken, even had his dying moments been deprived of all pleasurable sensations. Neither raptures in Christians, nor indifference in unbelievers, *prove* any thing of the unknown hereafter. How can we have *actual* views of things above, when eye hath not seen nor ear heard them? They are alone perceptible to angelic faculties, and we must be made like Christ before we can see him as he is. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth yet not appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, *for we shall see him as he is.*"¹ Heaven will burst in full glory on the astonished spirit of the departed saint, and—awful thought!—hell will open on the appalled soul of the

¹ 1 John iii. 2.

hardened sinner, whatever their respective feelings may previously have been. The tenor of the *life*, and not the emotions of the *death* of any man, must form our ground of hope as to his destiny in another world.

The state of Mr. Walker, just before he died, is most satisfactorily described by Lord Dartmouth, in a letter to their mutual friend, Mr. Rawlings.

Blackheath, July, 17, 1761.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dear Mr. Walker is still alive, but so near the confines of the grave, that the only wish we have left is for his speedy release ; the extreme weakness to which he is reduced, so as to be scarce able to speak, must be a state of great suffering, but it excites in him no murmur or complaint, nor the most distant expression of impatience. His chief concern while he had any strength left, was that he might not dishonour his master in the last stages of his disorder, by any fretfulness or impatience, whatever he might have to undergo ; his prayer has been heard, and he is now silent and submissive, so that it is scarcely to be known from himself that he is not perfectly at ease. He opens not his mouth, but to utter some useful admonition and advice to those about him, or to declare his sense of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and his stedfast confidence in God his Saviour. “ I know,” said he to me yesterday, “ that when this earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, I shall have a

building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

However nature must feel the loss of such a friend, yet the grief which it excites, is mixed with a joyful satisfaction and complacency, which forbids the most selfish heart to wish for his return ; no, my dear friend, he shall not come back to us,—may we be happy enough to go to him. He has more than once expressed his delight in the prospect of finding many of his dear Truro friends in those blessed regions to which he is going, and of seeing others come after him to the same happy place. That you will be among them I cannot have any doubt, and I trust also that I shall meet you there, if I never see your face on earth.

I am deeply indebted to you, more deeply than I can express, for all your late repeated favours. The copies which you allow me to keep, I admire from my heart. I hope they will be useful to me. Methinks I am glad that dear Mr. W. is not in a condition to hear the particulars of poor ———'s death. How they would have pained his loving heart. His example is indeed an awful warning to all, who through fear of men, are ashamed of Christ and of his word, in this adulterous and sinful generation ; the doom of such is but too plainly declared. I think every thing of Mr. Haweis that you can wish ; he seems to me, to grow in humility, which, as in all, so I take it more particularly in him, is to be looked upon as the only foundation of all other graces. His zeal is lively and I hope prudent, and his success, thank God, proportionable. Mr. Burnet is with us now, but having

been myself from home, I have as yet conversed but little with him ; I know the opinion that my dear friend Mr. Venn has of him.

* * * * *

I trust a lively and grateful sense of the great blessing that has been bestowed upon Truro, will be fixed upon the hearts of those who have been partakers of it, and that the want of their pastor and father, will keep them watchful and humble. He has often thankfully rejoiced in reflecting, that they have been brought on in such a way, as if they continue in it, the devil himself shall never prevail against them.

* * * * *

Mr. Jane and Mr. Burnet send love to you ; accept the same from, dear Sir,

Your obedient and affectionate servant,

D.

Saturday, 18. I have just received the sermons on the law. Mr. Walker appears to-day to be at the last extremity, he will hardly live till to-morrow. Happy release.

Sunday, July 19, 1761, the morning after his noble friend's last postscript was written, Mr. Walker's happy spirit passed with a gentle sigh from the sabbath on earth to that in heaven. Mr. Burnet thus describes his end. " He was on the Friday, seized with a stupor with delirium, till on Sunday morning, at a quarter past nine, he expired without a groan." On July the 20th, he also wrote the following account of Mr. Walker's death to Mr. Rawlings of St. Columbe.

Blackheath, July 20, 1761.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Walker is no longer an inhabitant of this world :—yesterday, at a quarter past nine in the morning, he left a poor sickly body, and joined the society of heaven. His death was like his behaviour in sickness—without a groan : I was not present ; Mr. Jane and Mrs. Randall had withdrawn for a moment, and the next moment, word was brought that he was gone. We cannot judge distinctly how, or in what manner, he was engaged previous to his dissolution ; he seemed to be in prayer, and was heard to say “ Lord Jesus : ” but for a day and night before, at times, his faculties were much benumbed ; and the testimonies already given to his faith and love were sufficient, abundantly. I refer you to the two letters I have wrote to Mr. Conon on this head, and earnestly pray the Lord to bless those awful providences to your soul and mine. Remember what he has said to me more than once, “ Why are you sorry, &c. I go to heaven, Christ my Lord died ; ” and “ Christ, my dear friend, will speedily return again.” I pray you be a comforter to those with you, who may be ready too much to grieve as those who have no hope, especially to dear Miss Tregenna. I saw your last to Mr. Pearson, and as I have wrote to Mr. Conon, you have no reason to question my love.

I am unfeignedly yours,

GEORGE BURNET.

Mr. Jane desires his affectionate regards to him and all friends. I go for Oxford and Huddersfield this day.

According to his own desire that he might be buried in whatever parish he died, the remains of Mr. Walker were interred in the churchyard at Lewisham. He had been removed to a lodging near the house of Lord Dartmouth, a few weeks before his death, where he expired amidst the affectionate attentions and sympathy of his friends, and to the inexpressible sorrow of all who had partaken of his counsel, and profited by his ministry. He was only in the forty-eighth year of his age.

After the funeral, Lord Dartmouth wrote to his friend Sir Richard Hill in these affecting terms:—
“ Perhaps I may be the first to acquaint you with the happy release of our dear friend Mr. Walker. He died in peace on Sunday morning, and was buried in Lewisham church-yard yesterday. His behaviour during the last stages of his illness was the same which you have seen it before, if I may not say that as his suffering increased, his faith and patience increased also. Indeed as the outward man decayed, the inward man appeared to be renewed and strengthened day by day. For near a week before his death, his weakness was so great, that he could not speak but with pain and difficulty, and therefore said little; what he did utter was to praise the Lord for his mercies, and to express his entire confidence in his faithfulness and truth. His last breath was drawn

without any struggle, and his countenance since his death is full of sweet composure and peace. The three little pieces which have been lately revised by him are now in the press, and will be published as soon as possible. It is proposed that his friends should contribute to take off among them, such a number as will defray the expense of the publication. If you will let me know what number of each you would have, I will take care to send them to you, and likewise for Mr. Powys, who will probably take some. The subjects are *Conviction of Sin*, *The Corruption of the Heart*, and *The Sacraments*. I hope they will be found of singular use. I look upon it as a blessing and peculiar privilege, for which I have cause to be abundantly thankful, that I have had the opportunity of seeing so much of Mr. Walker's behaviour, observing the temper of his mind, and hearing his wise and instructive conversation. I hope the remembrance of what I have seen and heard from him, will open, warm, and quicken my slothful soul."

"Thus," to use the language of Mr. Burnet, "was this faithful servant of Christ to the full as eminent and remarkable in his death, as he had been in his life—a witness of the truth and faithfulness of the Lord our God, who manifests himself to his faithful people, when flesh and strength fail."

It may be said of Mr. Walker, that both in public and private, he filled without a visible hiatus, the entire circumference of his circle of duty; nor does the whole history of the Church afford a superior

instance of a wise, self-denying, laborious parish priest. In these respects he has left indeed a model worthy of the imitation of all parochial ministers. Peculiar circumstances, however, and the different character of the present age from that in which he lived, may prevent his system of operation from being followed, as respects the details he prescribed to himself and his people. Many very valuable hints may yet unquestionably be obtained from it, as to the effective exercise of pastoral discipline, from the want of which our Church has suffered and is now suffering to a most injurious extent. Still, it is not every minister who possesses Mr. Walker's power of management and command. The respect his presence inspired, may be gathered from several circumstances of his life as narrated in this volume, and it will be further confirmed by the following expression in a letter of the excellent Hervey, after he had received him as his guest at Weston Flavel :—" I was lately," he says favoured at Weston with a visit from the Rev. Mr. Walker of Truro, who is indeed a most excellent man, and seems well to deserve the character he bears. There is something in him very engaging, and very venerable. During our conversation, I felt a kind of reverential awe on my mind, blended with more than fraternal affection. How old is he? By his looks he appears to be past forty. What a reproach it is to our men in power, nay to the nation itself, that so valuable a person should, at this time of life, be no more than a country curate. But he, good man, disregards the things of this world."

The description given by Calamy of the great Howe seems applicable to Mr. Walker. "As to his person, he was very tall and exceeding graceful. He had a good presence, and a piercing but pleasant eye; and there was that in his looks and carriage, that discovered he had something within that was uncommonly great, and tended to excite veneration. His intellectual accomplishments were eminent. He was one of great abstractedness of thought, a strong reasoner, and one that had a very penetrating judgment, which carried him as deep into a subject as most men ever went that handled it. He had bright natural parts, and they were greatly improved by study and experience. He had an admirable way of thinking upon any subject that offered; and many times very surprising turns in discoursing upon it."

All persons who have mentioned his appearance and character, agree in giving an outline of him somewhat similar to this. His countenance indicated the possession of a calm but exalted understanding, and his conversation was replete with the piety of a saint, the information of a scholar, the judgment of a sage, and the courtesy of a gentleman. In private life, he attracted the esteem and respect of all his associates, and repaid their affection by instructive lessons of truth. In his ministry, he was not content with a power of producing excitement and commanding attention, but inquired from his converts as to the nature and extent of their impressions, that he might enable them to distinguish between transient impulses of feeling, and the deep-rooted workings of vital re-

ligion. An overwhelming solicitude for souls actuated his every movement, and caused him to make each incident of life in some measure subservient to the concerns of eternity. Possessed of the rare power of gaining an ascendancy over the minds of others, he invariably used it for their spiritual benefit, and never once employed it for secular or selfish purposes. He sought no other reward than success in his ministry, and he resigned his benefice and the prospect of a rich alliance, that nothing might obstruct him in his one pursuit; nor was he ever heard to express a desire to exchange a scene of retirement and poverty, honoured by the especial blessing of God, for a more productive or more prominent situation. He was content to cultivate the portion of the vineyard assigned him by his heavenly Master, and had no anxiety but to dress it into health and fruitfulness, and to excite his fellow labourers to similar diligence. He owed nothing to this world, and tasted chiefly of its bitters; all his enjoyments descended from above, borne to him on the stream of that river which makes glad the city of our God, of whose waters his soul is now drinking at their source before the throne.

His works are mostly in the shape of sermons, or brief treatises on religious subjects.¹ They are remarkable for clear and well-arranged views of divine truth, accompanied with the most powerful applications to the conscience. It would be unfair to cri-

¹ Like those in his excellent little volume entitled, *Practical Christianity*.

ticise his style, because a great part of his writings were never prepared by himself for the press, and were only intended as plain instructions for his own congregation and friends. He was not incapable of sublime and original conception, but like the apostle, he studied, for the sake of usefulness, great plainness of speech. He seemed to be utterly unsolicitous about himself, and no more desired to write for fame, than to labour for the sake of gain; his only object was the honour of his heavenly Master, and not the vain applause of man. The effect of many pious writings and sermons is lost, in the admiration excited by the brilliant talents and imagination of their authors, and the messenger is frequently more thought of than his message. Mr. Walker escaped this evil by preaching and writing only for the heart, and by making all his discourses as simple as their subjects permitted, though never forgetting the dignity of truth, or falling below its majesty. In a sermon on Acts xxvi, 28, he says, “it is my endeavour always to speak in the most intelligible manner, and to bring what I have to say to a determinate *point* that may be easily seen, to the end that you may not be puzzled by a variety of matter and of distinctions;” and accordingly his addresses were so framed, that the topics he discussed were well apprehended by those who heard him, and dwelt in their memories.

His “*Christian*” contains a practical course of sermons, on *The sinfulness and misery of man—The helplessness of man—The power and love of Christ—Faith in Christ—The believer, a new creature—which*

will long continue to be read with delight and profit, by those who value the grand fundamental doctrines of the gospel. The “ Fifty-two sermons on the baptismal covenant, creed, ten commandments, and other important subjects of practical religion, being one for each Sunday in the year,” prefaced by a brief but interesting account of his life and ministry, are such valuable illustrations of the leading truths contained in our church catechism, that no clergyman ought to be without them. These were published in the year 1763, and the editor informs us that it was Mr. Walker’s intention, had his life been spared, to have printed a series of expository lectures upon the whole of the church catechism ; happily, however, those he lived to complete, have been long known to the world. In the year 1788, Mr. Barker, vicar of St. Mary’s, Hull, printed his nine sermons on the covenant of grace, with an addition of three letters on ordination. These discourses had previously found their way into the pages of the *Theological Miscellany*, but were now brought out separately, in order that they might become more extensively useful. The excellent Ambrose Serle superintended the publication of his “ *Christ the Purifier*,” “ containing ten discourses upon the sanctification of believers, through the love and grace of Jesus Christ,” and wrote a preface in recommendation of them. Of Mr. Walker he well observes, “ he desired to be and was a *bible divine*, one who wished to draw his religious principles entirely from the book of God, and who proved the real influence of those principles upon his heart,

by the careful conformity of his life. He maintained, after his blessed Master, that the *tree* must *first* be made good, ere the fruit could be good ; for *men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles* ; and that the grace of God leads men, according to an old observation, to ‘ work *from* life and not *for* life.’ ”

Many papers, letters, and single sermons of Mr. Walker have from time to time found their way into various religious periodicals, and all bear evidence of the power of his mind and the devotedness of his heart. The same qualities also appear in the smaller treatises, which were printed during his life and after his death ; and both in his published writings, and in those which yet remain in manuscript,¹ there are the strongest marks of a progressive apprehension of divine things, and of a growing humility.

The value of the course pursued by Mr. Walker, in very critical times, has been sufficiently adverted to during the progress of this narrative. One of the last counsels he gave to a favourite member of his Clerical Club was, “ whatever good you design to do, *do it in the Church* ;” and he was led to the expression of this opinion, by a conviction that all irregularity must end in disorder. The state of the religious world since his days, has too mournfully proved the truth of this impression. It was his decided opinion, that adherence to our established

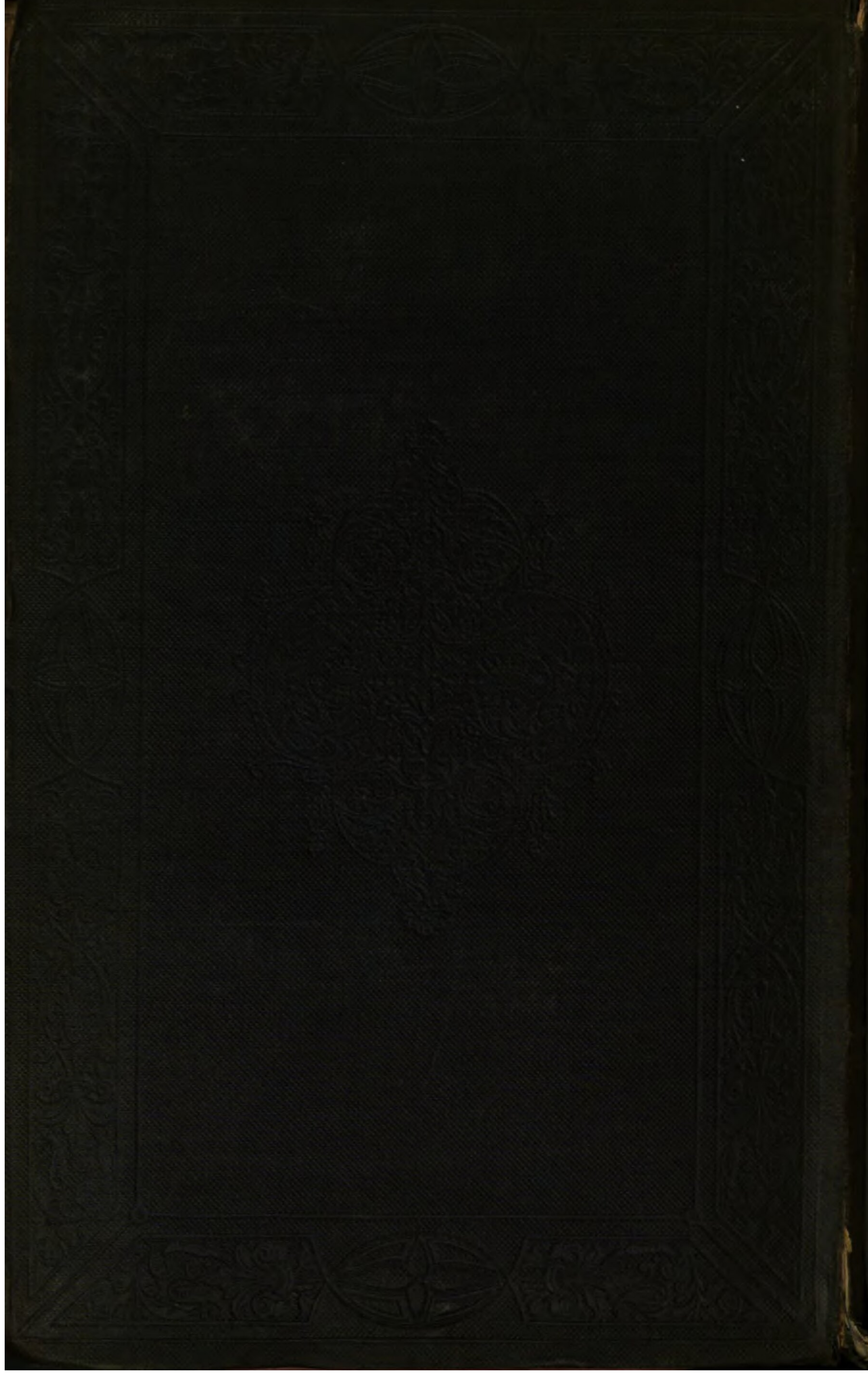
¹ Many of these are intended to be inserted in his *Miscellaneous Works*. Among them will be found nine sermons, forming a treatise on the *Christian Armour* ; also, sixteen on the *Holy Spirit*, with *Sacramental Sermons*, &c.

discipline, and a due maintenance of our scriptural doctrines, were alone likely to effect a removal of the evils which all good men alike deplored. "My conduct," said he, "with regard to the Methodists, hath been upon the plan of Gamaliel's advice; for though there appeared a zeal and boldness in them which might very justly engage my heart to them, yet I could never persuade myself that their proceedings were justifiable." "Nevertheless," he also remarked, "I trust they have been the means of kindling gospel principles among us, and seem about to leave the work to more regular and capable heads than their own." Herein we see the spirit of fairness and firmness. Let it be our actuating principle, as it was his. We owe to it, by God's blessing, the present strong and healthy condition of our national Establishment. We possess the essential elements of perpetuity, and need only, to ensure it, increased dimensions—a wise and united ministry,—scope for their zeal,—true pastoral discipline,—a hearty love of souls, with a spirit of Christian charity towards those who differ from us. Our system is capable of the noblest instrumentality, but it refuses to act except in spiritual hands. We have no evils to apprehend, but such as spring up within. If we lean towards popery on the one hand, or laxity on the other, our sun will quickly set. The age of apathy is past; the times require activity in all classes of men, and demand it in the ministers of religion. We have a rudder to keep us right, be our course ever so rapid, and an anchor that has been often tried; let us use them.

The eyes of all men are on their spiritual teachers, and brighten when they see them take their stand on the vantage ground of truth. The Church has passed through a recent storm, and like the cedar, has been more deeply rooted by its violence, and sent forth proportional ramifications in the succeeding calm. But our future prosperity depends on our maintenance of the good old principles; and to afford a practical illustration of their value, has been the object in view, in every stage of this history of the life and ministry of Mr. Walker.

THE END.

BOUND BY
WESTLEYS &
CLARK.
LONDON.



Sidney, Edwin,

The life and ministry of the Rev. Samuel Walker, formerly of Truro,
Cornwall

London 1838

Biogr. 1229 p

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10067765-8